Systematic Homiletics

J. J. A. Proudfoot

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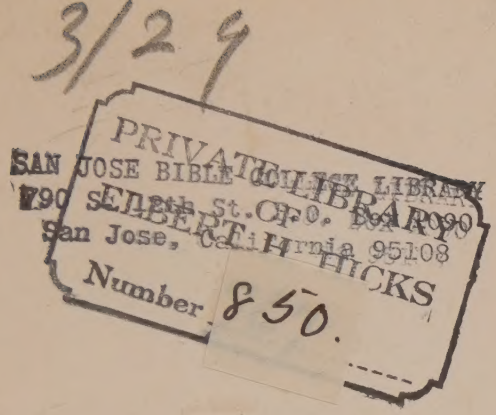

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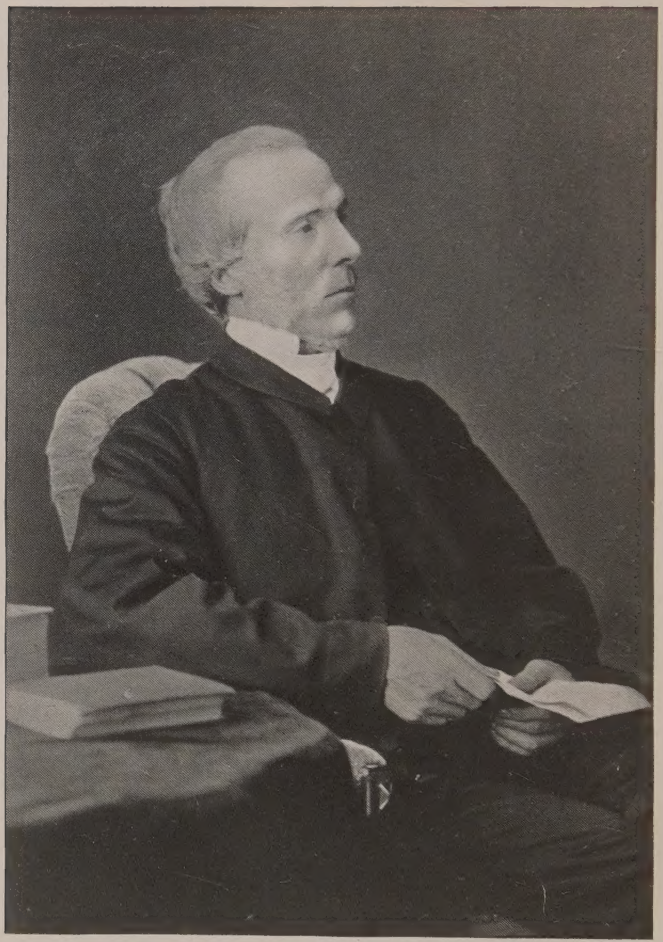

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Systematic Homiletics

BY

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PREFACE

For thirty-four years the Rev. J. J. A. Proudfoot, D. D., lectured on Homiletics in Knox College, Toronto, influencing the minds and hearts and molding the habits of the many hundreds who were privileged to receive instruction from him, as a preparation for the ministry of the Word. He was frequently requested to put his lectures into permanent form, and thus enlarge the circle of their influence.

When he retired, three years ago, from the Chair which he had so faithfully and efficiently filled, it was his purpose to prepare his lectures for publication, in fulfilment of the promise so frequently made. But ill health compelled postponement, until, when the end came and he was called home, the task was unperformed.

We were requested to undertake and complete the necessary work; the one having been for ten years his associate examiner in the College, and the other being the pastor of the family. Believing that his System of Homiletics is the very best that has ever been presented to preachers, and unwilling that it should, by his death, be, in large part, lost

to the Christian Church, we consented to do what we could to place within the reach of all ministers the substantial help in sermonizing which is here proffered.

The name—Systematic Homiletics—given by the revered lecturer to his subject, is well chosen. Here is to be found no mere scrap-book, heterogeneous collection of good things, closely or remotely connected with preaching; but a closely articulated system, and a thorough discussion of the subject.

He fails to find words sufficiently strong to express his detestation of that empiricism which has so frequently characterized the treatment of the subject, and brought it into disrepute. The foundations of his system are laid deep down in the character and faculties of the human mind, and all the parts of the superstructure are true to the great psychological facts.

He brought to his work ability, enthusiasm and devotion and his lectures, as now presented, are the product of a life-long study of one of the most important subjects taught in our colleges.

This volume will be specially welcome to the hundreds of ministers whose preaching power is in no small measure owing to the correct habits in sermonizing which he helped them to form. Many of them have grown old in the work, and some are still in the first raptures of joy over the most glorious work ever given to man to do. Both

will, to their great profit, refresh their memories by a perusal of the pages that follow.

This is Dr. Proudfoot's greatest and most abiding contribution to the work of the Christian Church. Conscious of the great sacredness of the subject, and of the noble work of one who has gone to his reward, we have endeavored to be faithful. His literary style has been, in large part, preserved. Students will miss some of the apt illustrations with which he illuminated and enforced his thoughts; but those omitted were so local in their coloring as to be unsuitable when the sphere is wider than the class-room.

Students who sat under his instruction remember well the genial, highly intelligent face, all aglow with enthusiasm, as he explained and illustrated his system, pressing it home upon the minds and hearts of his hearers. Or, perhaps, they remember better the day when their sermon lay upon the desk before him, and with true eye, unerring hand and keen blade, he proceeded to dissect, laying bare every flaw and fault. With what breathless interest he was listened to as he pointed out the merits of the sermon, cheerfully giving every meed of praise. At length the word "but," which marked a point of departure, and almost made the heart of the victim stop beating, introduced a most searching, incisive criticism, which was hard to bear, painful to remember, but of lasting benefit.

We desire to recognize the valuable services of his daughter, Mrs. I. E. Davidson, who has assisted

very materially in giving permanency to these lectures.

A. J. MacGillivray,
J. A. Turnbull,
Editors.

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In rhetorical discourse two things are essential. The one is a practical end to be gained; the other is definite matter or a definite subject by the discussion or proof of which we attain this practical end. If the one be wanting, you will speak without a purpose; if the other be wanting, you will fail to accomplish the end in view.

I. We shall deal with the subject first, always keeping the end in view. The subject in preaching is always complicated with a text. We must, therefore, determine the relation in which subject and text should stand to each other. We shall also indicate the kind of texts that should be chosen, whether literal or figurative, whether doctrinal or preceptive. We shall consider the subjects you will naturally deal with, these being very few compared with the texts at your disposal. We shall consider the invention of the subject out of the matter of the text. In this, creative power is exercised, and rhetorical skill and inspiration are manifested. We shall consider the unity of the subject, its organic structure and rhetorical qualities.

II. We shall then deal with the discussion of the subject with direct and supreme reference to your

purpose in speaking, which must never be merely teaching, but always something ulterior for the sake of which instruction is imparted. The subject must be discussed or explained rhetorically. Rhetorical explanation, as distinguished from verbal or grammatical, must be understood. Rhetorical proof must also be studied and mastered.

To excite emotion, explanation and proof must be suitably arranged. By this, Movement is secured, and friction in the mind is produced, which is indispensable to excitation through the understanding. To intensify emotion, adaptation must be aimed at. You must take into account your hearers' active powers, classifying their emotions, feelings or affections; you must take into account their knowledge and character, their maxims, prejudices, etc., and also their circumstances and environments; you must learn how to make emotions subservient to your purpose by exciting some feelings, allaying others, and converting one class of feelings into another. You must know how to adapt yourself to your subject and to your hearers.

My aim shall be to show that all the power subservient to your purpose, that is contained in your subject, may be brought out and applied to the whole mind of your hearers, understanding, sensibilities and will; and more than this rhetoric cannot do. Principles will be stated and settled; and the need of Homiletical knowledge and skill to the preacher will be explained and vindicated.

It must be admitted that eloquent and impressive preaching alone is not competent to accomplish

the great work of converting men to God and of building them up in knowledge, faith and holiness. The Spirit's influences are needed and promised for this purpose. Still, there is no need to incorporate with Systematic Homiletics the doctrine relating to the Holy Spirit, and to His quickening and enlightening influences. Entire reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit is quite compatible with the use of the most convincing arguments and the most earnest appeals. Such are used in the Word of God itself. Indeed, we are bound to do our very best to persuade men to be reconciled to God and to love and serve Him. If we do not, we cannot with a good conscience pray for divine help. According to Augustine's principle, we must preach as if everything depends on our persuasive eloquence; and we must pray to God and trust in Him, as if everything depends on divine grace alone. Above all, we must give to God all the praise for any good our preaching does. Hence the need and promise of divine influences to render the preaching of the Gospel effectual to salvation should not require anything peculiar in the construction of discourse, nor should they be any apology for ignorance, want of skill, or indolence on our part. Besides, the Holy Spirit's influence on the mind will surely be according to the rational or emotional nature that God has given us, to which sound homiletics should teach us to adapt our discourse.

Moreover, our teaching is different in its nature from the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Ours seeks to present saving truth to the mind, but that of the

Holy Spirit effects a change in the mind itself, imparting to it a spiritual susceptibility and the capacity of perceiving the glory, beauty and desirableness of spiritual objects which the mind cannot see. Our teaching may be likened to carrying a lamp, shining more or less brightly, into a room where a blind man is sitting; whereas, that of the Holy Spirit may be likened to the operation of a surgeon removing the cataract from a blind man's eyes. As human and divine teaching, in the application of the remedy, are so different, there can be no need to combine them in a system of homiletics. Still, trust in the promised aid of the Holy Spirit is of unspeakable importance to the preacher; it will surely encourage and comfort his heart, and it will give the accent of assurance to his words.

It is a matter of congratulation that a knowledge of homiletics is now recognized as a part of ministerial education; but in prosecuting this study, the student labors under special disadvantages. One is that preliminary qualifications are not required. While a knowledge of Greek, Latin and Hebrew is required to prepare for the study of theology, a knowledge of logic and psychology is not demanded for entering on the study of homiletics. This is surely a very great mistake. A student should earnestly prosecute the study of logic and psychology, not merely for the sake of mental improvement, but because these parts of a liberal education are the very tools which the effective speaker must constantly use, and with which he should be familiar.

Another disadvantage under which this study is

prosecuted is that too little time is being devoted to it in theological colleges. The student may, without preliminary qualifications, acquire some knowledge of rhetorical principles; but he cannot acquire skill in the application of those principles. Thus his theoretical knowledge is of little practical utility and tends rather to perplex than to assist and direct. The time devoted to rhetorical studies is entirely disproportionate to the time given to other branches. We can, indeed, explain and establish principles; but "a system of principles imperfectly comprehended, and not familiarized by practice, will prove an impediment rather than a help." Students often leave college with little knowledge of homiletical principles, and less skill in the application of them. They are thus placed at a great disadvantage, and naturally forget what they have imperfectly learned, and have to acquire by much study and painful experience what they ought to have mastered at college.

This manner of seeking to acquire a knowledge of rhetorical discourse is opposed to the experience of most eminent speakers. It is well known how earnestly Demosthenes labored to acquire skill as an orator. Any one who has studied Cicero's work, "De Oratore," although he will find no system of rhetoric, will find ample proof of the energy and diligence with which he prosecuted rhetorical studies during his whole public life. It is well known that Charles James Fox, the most eminent parliamentary orator of his day, hastened to his country house whenever parliament was prorogued

to study the Greek classics. This he did not merely to acquire a thorough knowledge of Greek, but also to perfect his knowledge of English, by endeavoring to express in one language the finest shades of meaning to be found in the other.

Daniel Webster was known to compose his great speeches with the utmost care, and to be constantly on the lookout for rhetorical illustrations and proofs, which, in some cases, he retained for years in his memory before a suitable opportunity of using them presented itself. Gladstone's ability as a speaker and his devotion to study are well known. He seems to have studied for the same reasons as Fox. Now if great statesmen and lawyers were so studious in order to do justice to the causes entrusted to them, all of which were secular, shall we say that any kind of speaking is good enough for the Gospel of Christ?

Those who would not dare state such a reason as this, would not hesitate to say that any kind of speaking is good enough for the hearers they generally address, especially in country places. A person who holds or expresses such an opinion has not the heart of a minister of Christ, nor does he know the value of an immortal soul. Besides, it should be known that illiterate people require plain and correct words, and also a more logically correct statement and discussion of a subject than is required by educated persons. Educated persons can extract some instruction from a confused and ill-digested discourse, but illiterate persons cannot derive any edification at all from it. The uneducated

require great plainness of speech and strict conformity to the laws of thought in a sermon. Hence, it is an admirable training for a minister to have to preach to such.

It is now proper to indicate wherein Homiletics presented in this system differs from other works on the subject. It is commonly assumed, and sometimes strongly asserted, that preaching the Gospel is rhetorically different from speaking on political or judicial subjects. What I wish to point out is *the mistake of making preaching differ in form from other kinds of effective public speaking.* This is equivalent to saying that preaching is not rhetorical.

I admit that there are two points in reference to which there is a difference between preaching and deliberative or forensic speaking. One is the difference in the *subject of discourse.* But, so far as the subject is concerned, there is a difference even between deliberative and forensic discourse; and yet all admit that both should be rhetorical, that is, persuasive. But here the preacher has an immense advantage. He has the grandest subject in the universe, one that is studied and looked into even by angels. It relates to God, His attributes, purposes, and truths. It relates to man, to his recovery from a state of sin and condemnation, and the remedy provided for his relief and for his attainment of eternal life. Surely these things can be rhetorically, that is, practically presented. It is also greatly in the preacher's favor that his subject is adapted to man's legal and moral necessities.

It is fitted to enlighten and stimulate the conscience, and to move his religious nature to its depth. The preacher has also the hearer's conscience in his favor, which is a great advantage. Preaching should be persuasive above all other speaking.

Another point in which preaching differs from other kinds of public speaking is the difference in *aim*. The preacher's efforts are directed to the personal advantage of his hearers; whereas, in secular oratory, it is something ulterior that is aimed at. The statesman seeks to persuade his hearers to pass a bill, the advocate seeks to persuade a judge and a jury to favor his client; but neither seeks the welfare of the persons addressed. But the preacher strives to persuade his hearers to seek their highest interests, to lay hold on eternal life, to acquire holiness. Even when inculcating the duties of piety and benevolence by which God is glorified and men are benefited, the preacher's aim should be to benefit his hearers by bringing them to exercise pious and benevolent affections, endeavoring to make the tree good that the fruit may be good. Now, although sacred and secular eloquence differ in subject and aim, yet they both agree in endeavoring to convince and persuade, and these are the fundamental elements of rhetorical discourse.

It is clear, then, that *only one rhetoric is possible*. Its principles never can become different unless a change takes place in the constitution of men's minds —in their intellectual and active powers.

Were the mistake we wish to correct merely speculative it might not be of much consequence, but it

is intensely practical and mischievous in its influence. Some preachers, for example, ignoring the fact that their discourse should be rhetorical, consider themselves merely teachers and address the understanding alone, never seeking to persuade. They are apt to become narrow and pedantic; hence innumerable divisions and subdivisions, which a man in dead earnest would never think of. Hence, there is a proverbial reference to a preaching style, as uninteresting and tedious. On the other hand, some preachers do not seek to teach nor convince; but they feel that they must make some kind of impression; so they are apt to work on the feelings through the imagination; then they become sensational. Others seek to influence hearers by sympathy, through excitation of their own nervous system. Loud speaking and violent gestures follow as a result. This is due to nature rebelling against what is unnatural.

Can we account for these differences which so generally exist between preaching and other kinds of persuasive speaking? We can. Two reasons may be stated. One is that *homiletics is taught empirically*, i. e. not scientifically. This is well explained by Professor Fisk's statement: "Homiletics is a well-meant attempt to build a system of Sacred Rhetoric on what is the only proper foundation—the preaching of Christ and the Apostles and Prophets. Valuable aid may also be obtained from Augustine, Luther, etc. A careful examination of discourses which have come down to us with a reputation of power, and which also move us when we

read them, as well as the careful examination of effective modern sermons, reveals certain characteristics which were in them all, and which can be definitely stated. Homiletics is simply a body of principles or rules gathered by such searching analysis of the best sermons in every age of the Church."

Professor Fisk considers it a meritorious thing to make the difference between preaching and speaking in parliament or in a court of justice as great as possible. Professor Kidder holds the same view in his Homiletics. He contends that preaching is totally different from ordinary effective speaking on secular subjects. He speaks of rhetoric as of seular or heathenish origin and tendency. He even refuses to allow that homiletics is a species of rhetoric, as this would imply its inferiority. Does it make a man inferior to animals to call him a rational animal? Van Oosterzee seems to lean to the same view. This matter will come under consideration when we endeavor to define rhetoric and homiletics.

It is enough to say that Professor Fisk's statement overlooks the fact that rhetoric is a formal science, which has no matter of its own and lends itself as easily to preaching the Gospel as to the discussion of matters pertaining to the common weal and to the affairs of domestic life. It would be a great loss to be deprived of the splendid speeches delivered by ancient and modern statesmen and lawyers. It would be a loss, too, to be deprived of the rhetorical writings of the Ancients. Further, the standard he gives of homiletical, as distinguished

from rhetorical discourse, is not reliable, as many of the distinguished preachers have been rhetoricians, and owed their power and influence to rhetorical studies and skill. In addition to all this, the standard which he presents is uncertain, and indeed, impracticable. Works on homiletics deal largely with sermons and outlines of sermons, and construct classes in which they may be placed. This is empiricism and it is not satisfactory. It is true that science must begin in this inductive method, and that Aristotle adopted it. Still he did not stop at this, but proceeded at once to construct systems of both Logic and Rhetoric on broad and fundamental principles.

So far as the preaching of the Lord and His apostles is concerned, we have very few examples indeed. Our Lord's preaching was not of such a nature as to furnish an example to uninspired men. His design was mainly to teach a system of saving truth, and, instead of producing an immediate impression, to furnish material for preaching for all ages. In fact, He says that He used parables, not, as many contend, to beautify His method of discourse and make it an example to us, but to avoid producing a premature excitement, and a prejudice against the truth. His perfect adaptation of discourse to His hearers, however, could belong only to One who knew what was in man, and who could produce in every case the precise impression which He desired. He thus left immeasurably behind Him all the religious teachers who have ever lived. His words evoked a response from His hearers. "He

knew what was in man," and He could always speak a word in season.

Then, very few of the Apostles' discourses have been recorded. Peter's sermon at Pentecost consists of an exposition of several passages in the Old Testament with the view of accounting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and showing that the resurrection of Christ had been predicted by prophets as well as witnessed by apostles, thus proving Jesus to be the Messiah; and a conclusion in which he exhorts his hearers to repentance. Conviction and persuasion are clearly arrived at and then enforced by Scriptural exegesis.

Paul's sermon at Athens is different. Being addressed to the heathen it does not contain a single quotation from Scripture; but it appeals to the light of natural religion, addresses the understanding and conscience of the hearers, and calls on them to repent in view of God's offered mercy and of the coming judgment.

The preaching of the Apostles more nearly resembles that to the heathen, than preaching needed to convince and persuade those in a settled state of the church, who know the truth, and who need to have it impressed on their minds, and lodged in their hearts.

The great men who followed the Apostles, especially after the time of Origen, introduced an allegorizing method of preaching, which is unsafe, and not to be imitated and from which the church is not yet fully emancipated. I have read discourses of Chrysostom and of Augustine and am free to say

that, in general, they are not constructed on sound rhetorical principles. They are exceedingly profuse and prolix. There are, indeed, precious gems of exposition and, occasionally, grand thoughts and flashes of genius and eloquence. But the structure of them is often not correct; and, in many cases, there is neither train of thought followed out, symmetrical development, nor graceful movement.

We must not be misled by a "reputation of power" to which Professor Fisk refers. Power there certainly is, but it is the power of divine truth, and this is not much benefited or intensified by the manner of presentation.

If we are to construct a system of homiletics, we must not be confined in our investigation to sermons that have been handed down to us; but we must also study the ablest methods of persuasive speaking that are available. If we are to seek principles, we must not be confined to what is called pulpit eloquence, but we must secure them wherever they are to be found.

In what has been said there is no want of deference to the Word of God. The Bible does not teach Homiletics any more than it teaches systems of Theology or of Moral Philosophy. Although we must be indebted to it for saving knowledge, yet we must by the study and exercise of our own faculties acquire a knowledge of persuasive discourse, at the same time availing ourselves of the knowledge and experience of others. But it does sanction our trying to address all our hearers' faculties. We find powerful reasoning in some passages; in others we

have the most earnest appeals to moral and religious feeling; and some passages are of extraordinary persuasive power. There is much, too, that is fitted to please the imagination and to gratify taste. Thus, while Scripture does not teach rhetoric, it sanctions and encourages the rhetorical presentation of truth and inspires it.

Neither is there any disrespect shown to the sermons of uninspired preachers. But what evidence have we that the best sermons in all ages are those that have been published? It is also to be remembered that judging preaching by its effects is not so reliable as judging secular speaking by its effects. The preacher has the great advantage of the most interesting and powerful truth in the world; and he has also the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. These may render even poor preaching effectual. The secular speaker is much more dependent on his own powers and rhetorical skill.

Moreover, the preacher is not trained as the secular orator is. If the latter does not speak well, people will not listen to him, and they will probably indicate their disapproval. But this is not the case with the preacher, no matter how badly he may preach. If an advocate acquires the reputation of losing cases entrusted to him, he will soon have no clients. For these reasons it is easy to see that the speaking of the secular orator is likely to be more natural than that of the preacher, and more in harmony with the spirit and requirements of the age. It has been maintained that the celebrated Greek orators were trained by their hearers who became

good critics, and who would not listen to poor or bad speaking.

If, according to Professor Fisk, we are to seek aid in forming a system of homiletics by the careful examination of effective modern sermons, how shall we proceed? Whose sermons shall we analyze? Those of men of great ability and learning? But their methods are often conflicting and illogical, their excellence being more in the matter than the form. Shall we analyze the sermons of popular preachers? But popularity, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, gives a low and poor idea of eloquence; and it may be due to novelty, presumption, advertising, sensationalism, or the use of means by which any excitement may be aroused. Shall we analyze the sermons of those who have done most good? But who is to determine this? The abiding effects of good preaching are spiritual and invisible. The supposed good may be due to the previous, contemporaneous, or subsequent labors of others, or to the special work of the Holy Spirit. At the end of our Lord's ministry there were only 500 brethren, while through Peter's sermon 3,000 were converted. Empiricism is largely to blame for all that is peculiar, unnatural and ineffective in preaching.

It is easy to see that a collection of sermons composed by different individuals and in different ages cannot furnish a standard to which preaching should be conformed. To seek to imitate none but preachers will make discourses as unlike as possible all other kinds of oratory. This is not at all desirable,

nor does it make discourses acceptable to persons living in this age. The tendency of such empirical methods is to perpetuate the faults of past ages and to prevent the preacher acquiring inventive or creative power.

The other thing that has made preaching different from other kinds of rhetorical discourse, is *allowing a Scripture text to determine the structure of the discourse.*

A text is considered a necessary part of a sermon. Webster defines a sermon as "A discourse grounded on some text or passage of Scripture." This introduces an element that has produced much confusion. A text is not an essential part of a sermon. Good Gospel sermons can be preached without texts. *A rhetorical discourse must have a definite subject.* This is essential. It is not meant that texts should not be used; but that it is the subject contained in the text, i. e., the soul of the text, and the end aimed at that should determine the structure of the sermon. Allowing a text to give form to a sermon has done much harm.

(a) This is evident in the classification of discourses, as Topical, Textual and Expository. Such classification practically amounts to this: a Topical is made on a small fragment of text; a Textual on a larger portion containing several important words or statements; an Expository, generally, on several verses. The basis of this classification is the text, which is not essential; and the subject,—if there should happen to be one,—which is essential, is de-

prived of its full control. If the Textual or the Expository sermon has not a definite subject possessing unity, organic structure and practical aim it is not a rhetorical discourse at all.

(b) Allowing the text to control the sermon has led to a mechanical partition of discourse: the text, introduction, explanation, proposition, division, development and conclusion. A sermon may have all these, but they are not essential. *The only essential parts are the subject and the discussion of it; these must be in every rational discourse.* To make a system of homiletics an exposition of these seven parts is to confound things accidental with things essential; and it must lead to hopeless confusion. Such partition must be fatal to invention, freedom and inspiration.

(c) A still worse partition of the matter of discourse is to divide the sermon invariably into three or four heads. If a subject is explained and proved, if a duty is presented and enforced, or if a principle and its workings are indicated, there can, in such cases, be only two co-ordinate heads. In view of these facts it is no wonder that students of homiletical works are perplexed and discouraged, and that preaching is made as different as possible from effective speaking on all the practical affairs of personal and social life.

If this almost universal practice were changed, I do not see why preaching should not be made as instructive and impressive as the best of secular speaking, nor why a thing which creates a prejudice against preaching the Gospel should not be

corrected. This would certainly improve preaching, and it would attract many who do not like the peculiarities of a pulpit style; and yet it would be none the less serious and Scriptural.

Notice particularly that the objection is not to preaching on texts, but to treating a text as a subject. Then a text is not an essential part of a sermon, although it may furnish the matter out of which a subject is invented. The Homiletical Magazine of March, 1887, furnishes illustrations of the practice to which objection is taken.

Text, John viii, 51. Subject, "The Undying."

1. A duty of the present,
2. A doctrine of the future.

"The Undying" is not a subject. Besides, it is not discussed. Then the causal relation between the duty and the second head, which is the principal thing, is ignored. These are just two little essays

Take rather for your subject "The unspeakable advantage of keeping Christ's words." Then (1) Explain the nature of the duty here referred to—keeping Christ's words as conveyed in this connection. (2) The blessed consequences of this "never dying," i. e., possessing spiritual life forever, temporal death not even interrupting it.

Numbers x, 29-30. Subject, "The Church and the World."

(1) The Israelites in their pilgrimage were a type of the people of God.

(2) What Moses said to Hobab is what the people of God are saying to the worldly.

(3) What Hobab said to Moses is what the worldly too often say to the people of God.

There is no subject here. These things are not co-ordinate. If the writer had wished to present the Israelites as a type of the people of God, he might have explained this in the introduction. Then he might have had for his practical subject:

(1) The kind, generous and confidant invitation of the Church to the worldly, and

(2) The inexpressible folly of refusing it as Hobab did. Or, putting the matter in a positive form, there are just these two things, the invitation and the encouragement to accept it.

A simpler method may be based on two fundamental principles: one is that the preacher must have some definite end in view, some object to be gained; the other is that he must have some facts or arguments by the presentation of which he expects to gain this end. These facts or arguments are the means which he uses; and these reduced to a concentrated and organic form constitute the subject of discourse. In order to accomplish this, they must be meditated on and elaborated by the mind working according to its own laws, until they are fused together and thus acquire unity, so that they may be presented in one field of view and support one another.

This seems to have been Cicero's practice in pleading. B. II, 27. "When, after hearing and understanding the nature of a cause, I proceed to examine the subject matter of it, I settle nothing till

I have ascertained to what point my whole speech, bearing immediately on the question of the case, must be directed. I then very diligently consider two other points; the one, how to recommend myself or those for whom I plead; the other, how to sway the minds of those before whom I speak to that which I desire. Thus the whole business of speaking rests upon three things in persuasion: that we prove what we maintain to be true, that we conciliate those who hear us, that we produce in their minds whatever feeling our course may require."

In the case of a Christian pastor, if he is what he should be, the conciliating need not be prominent, except casually in the introduction. He finds a definite object at which he should aim, and then the matter at his disposal for this purpose. The subject thus acquires organic structure, and being quickened by the fervid zeal of the orator, it becomes a living thing. The subject thus understood is the germ of the discourse; the whole must come out of it as the oak tree comes out of the acorn. It contains in a concentrated form all the interest and power of the sermon. Hence no essential part of it can be omitted; and no proof or illustration can be added for its own sake, but only so far as it is needed to prove or illustrate the subject. Now having constructed or invented such a subject, if a person can by proof or explanation bring out all the interest and persuasive power contained in the subject that can serve his purpose; and if he can apply it to the whole mind, the understanding, sensibility, and

will of his hearers, not even overlooking taste and imagination, he will do all that can possibly be done.

This not only indicates the end you should have in view, but it also implies the arguments you are to use. Rhetoric does not furnish the facts nor the arguments, but it tells you that you must have them and it teaches how to arrange them for effect, when you have found them. The facts and arguments are probably lying in the mind like a heap of rubbish, just as brick, lime and sand are laid on a street where a house is to be built. Rhetoric will do for the orator what architecture does for the builder. Or, the facts and arguments may be likened to a turbulent mob, and rhetoric will do as much in this case as military art, which will convert the mob into a disciplined army.

This is not stated here to explain the nature and working of creative power—as this will be adequately discussed in its proper place—but merely to show the necessity of having a definite aim and suitable materials to be used in the attainment of it.

It is easy to see that the matter of discourse must have organic structure. All living objects with which we are conversant—whether animal or vegetable—have organic structure, more or less complex. It is only when discourse has a similar structure that the orator by his fervid zeal can breathe into it the breath of life. The separate particles which are unconnected must be elaborated in the mind till they are united or fused together according to their affinities. Your hearers are, in some

cases, not able to undertake this labor for you and, in other cases, they are not willing. Hence, unless you present your material in such a manner as to enable them to relish and digest it, they will not be so much influenced by it as your purpose in speaking demands.

It is interesting to notice that great writers, such as Luther and Calvin, by their power in grasping a subject seem to leave no broken or disconnected matter scattered over their discourses. Their ideas are like great boulders, massive and irresistible. Their discourses bear the impress of their minds.

It is easy to see that we must be guided by logic in bringing out the persuasive power of our subject. Merely verbal explanation of the leading idea will not suffice. It must be divided or analyzed, and that, too, in an orderly manner. Then nothing fitted to influence hearers will be lost in the discussion. Then, too, the subject will be kept for a considerable time in living contact with the mind and the constituent parts of the subject will be made to support one another. *Lucidus ordo* will pervade the whole. It is only a disciplined mind that can do this. It is not meant that everything in your subject that can influence your hearers is to be made use of, but enough to serve your purpose. Hearers must not be wearied by excessive proof or illustration. Rare skill is needed to see how much is to be said.

On the other hand, if the truth is to be applied to the active powers of the mind, these must be

studied and classified. Our Lord's skill in this respect is perfect. He knew perfectly "what was in man" and the peculiar feelings of his hearers individually. Thus he could "speak a word in season to him that is weary." He could touch the conscience. He could rebuke the self-righteous. He could reveal to a person his true character, of which the man addressed had not been aware. Thus it is easy to see that we must find in logic and psychology a scientific basis for Rhetoric or Homiletics.

The educational value of such studies must be very great. No influence we can exert over our fellow creatures is greater or more excellent than that of wise and persuasive speech. Ministers of the Gospel are public speakers. Hence, we should endeavor to excel in this, for Christ's sake and for the sake of our hearers, for the adequate instruction and persuasion of whom we shall have to give an account at the last.

Great learning will not make us independent of the form of discourse. Speaking in public is exceedingly common at present and is increasing. This is due to our political and municipal institutions, and to the amazing increase of societies all over the country. Hence, if the ministry is to be respected as a great power for good the minister's words must have power.

Even for their own sakes ministers should seek to acquire the greatest possible efficiency. They should seek to edify the people so as to secure the peace and loyalty of the congregation and secure

for the pastor due influence in the session. If he preaches well the elders will not take any liberties with him. There is a great deal in this. The celebrated John Angel James, for a long time the chief man in the Congregational Church, knowing well the democratic feelings of the people in Congregational churches and the tyranny of deacons, said to his students, "If you preach well you will be sustained by the people, and then you may snap your fingers at the deacons."

Dr. C. Hodge mentions, incidentally, the case of a congregation that had become dissatisfied and unhealthy. There was no fault found with the professional, or personal conduct of the pastor; there was no want of harmony among the people; but it was felt that something was wrong; what it was no one could discover till, at last, an old Scotchman said, "we are starved." The truth thus stated was instantly felt. So it is with many congregations. This is often the secret of short pastorates, especially, of young men, and of those who attach more importance to elocution than to the matter of discourse. Presbyterians must be nourished with sound doctrine and plenty of it, and that rhetorically presented. If this be wanting there will be quarreling, multiplication of societies, superficial excitement, desire to have a liturgy. But ritualistic churches can flourish without such preaching, and even with no preaching at all.

PLAN OF THE WORK AND DEFINITION OF HOMILETICS

CHAPTER II

PLAN OF THE WORK AND DEFINITION OF HOMILETICS

Having established principles, two things will mainly occupy our attention and time. I. The subject; II. The Discussion of it. To give pre-eminence to these as the essential parts of discourse, the introduction, peroration, etc., will not be co-ordinated with them, but will find a place in a miscellaneous part at the end.

I. The Subject will require much consideration, especially as it is always complicated with a text which has a tendency to encroach upon it, and indeed to supersede it. The difference between it and a text, and the connection which should exist between them; the choice of texts and subjects; the unity of the subject and the invention of the subject, will require earnest attention and much time.

II. The Proof, or the Discussion of the Subject will be greatly facilitated by the proper construction of the Subject itself. The discussion will include method by which its persuasive power will be fully brought out in a skillful manner. The discussion will also include Rhetorical Development, which implies the application of the subject to the mind. This is for the purpose of dealing with the emotions or

feelings and the will, awakening interest, exciting emotions or feelings, and transforming or suppressing those that are opposed to the effect you wish to produce.

Before proceeding to the work indicated we shall present a definition of homiletics or rhetoric, and refute objections to the rhetorical presentation of truth, especially of the Gospel, and to the utility of homiletical culture.

The first is that of Professor Shedd. He calls it the "art of sermonizing." He does not indicate an important relation to rhetoric at all. This is surely a serious oversight. Besides, to call it merely an art, i. e., something to be learned by practice, is to deprive it of scientific value. This matters little, however, in his hands, as he does not profess to treat the subject systematically. When he calls it "sacred rhetoric," he seems to convey the idea that it is a species of rhetoric, sacred being the differentia. This treats rhetoric as a class-word which may have as many species as there are subjects to which it can be applied. Thus preaching the Gospel is one species of rhetoric, speaking in parliament another, and pleading in a court of justice a third. But if rhetoric is the science of persuasion, there can be only one rhetoric, no matter what the subject may be, provided that it is of a practical or persuasive nature.

Vinet says: "Eloquence, certainly, is always the same; it is not one thing in the pulpit, another in the senate or at the bar. There are not two rhet-

orics any more than two logics. Still, the nature of ecclesiastical discourse involves differences, adds rules which constitute a particular art under the name of homiletics."

According to this the difference between homiletics and rhetoric is merely in the subject and aim and homiletics should be defined as "the application of rhetorical principles to the construction of religious discourse." If we adopt this definition, we cannot stop here, as the definition includes rhetoric, which must also be defined.

Aristotle's definition of rhetoric is: "A faculty of considering all the possible means of persuasion on every subject." (B. I. C. II., s. i.) Again, "It is, as it were, a kind of off-shoot of logic, and that department of moral philosophy which it is fair to call the science of social life." To say that it is an offshoot of logic and ethics does not reveal its nature at all. Connecting it with ethics is opposed to his frequent and emphatic, and correct statement that it is a formal science like logic which has no matter peculiar to itself, but is adapted to all social matters of duty or interest.

There are two things, however, in his statement worthy of special notice. One is the vital connection that exists between rhetoric and logic. It conveys the idea that a knowledge of logic is indispensable to a rhetorician, i. e., that logic must guide in rhetorical explanation and proof, or in the structure of discourse and the discussion of it.

The other thing that he asserts frequently is that rhetorical discourse being of a practical nature and

pertaining to social life, must be governed by a moral purpose. It is at this point he tries to connect rhetoric with ethics, which he subsequently denies, connecting it only with logic. He wished evidently to dignify it by giving it matter of its own.

To my mind Aristotle is not satisfactory, nor even consistent. He shows that in seeking to influence judges a person should not seek to excite feeling to gain his cause, but should rely on arguments alone. After all this he shows how to influence by exciting passions, many of those which he would excite being bad indeed, such as wrath, malice, envy and even revenge. He does not show how the truth should be presented to excite emotion and thus persuade.

The same vacillation appeared in Cicero's time. Cicero introduces Cassius, contending that unless rhetoric furnishes matter of debate and information of a legal nature, it is of no use whatever. Then he represents Antonius taking the opposite and, I think, the correct view, proving that it is a valuable but formal science.

According to Archbishop Whately rhetoric is "argumentative composition." But this definition is defective, as it leaves out persuasion, which is its distinguishing characteristic. Whately, however, treats of persuasion; but he refuses to admit it into his definition, as restricting it too much. He also calls it "an off-shoot from logic." But this, on his part at least, is defective in another aspect, as his logic does not recognize the doctrine of concepts at

all, and hence it furnishes no guide in rhetorical explanation, which is a very great defect.

Theremin, adopting the view that Aristotle rejects, makes rhetoric a part of ethics; and, in view of the practical end of rhetorical discourse, declares eloquence to be a virtue.

The Stoics declared eloquence to be a virtue and wisdom. But they defined virtue as knowledge, not merely theoretical but practical. All the great ancient rhetoricians declared that an orator should be a good man; and that he must at least appear to be such in his discourse. Quintilian defines oratory as "the art of speaking well."

Rhetoric is, according to Campbell, "the grand art of communication, not of ideas only, but of sentiment, passions, dispositions and purposes."

According to Isocrates, "the father of eloquence, from whose school none but real heroes proceeded, as from the Trojan horse" (Cicero), "rhetoric is the science of persuasion." This might be improved by calling it the science of persuasive discourse, as it is possible to persuade without words. A gesture, a look, may be eloquent. It is necessary thus to define rhetoric if we define homiletics as *the application of its principles to religious discourse.*

Having defined rhetoric, it is important to be able to distinguish it from kindred arts and sciences—to see it not merely distinctly, but also clearly. This is of more than theoretical importance. If you can distinguish it from philosophy, you will not be in danger of speaking in a philosophical style. If you

can distinguish it from poetry, you will not speak in a poetic style which is entirely unsuitable to rhetoric.

Rhetorical discourse always contemplates one to be addressed, whom we may consider an opponent, whom we wish to bring over to our views, feelings and purposes. Truth is presented rhetorically when it is presented with this express design. Thus it is necessarily persuasive. It always has for its object some practical effect on the hearer, to induce him to embrace it, and yield up his mind to its influence.

The orator is bound to think of persons, not merely as hearers, but as persons to be influenced, "to be brought over," as Professor Campbell expresses it, to his views, feelings and purposes. If a man has not a valuable subject, which he perceives clearly, and feels deeply and is inspired by, how can he excite enthusiasm, how can he communicate an impulse? If a man cannot make a decided impression, he will never become an effective speaker. Such impression should be aimed at in every sermon.

It may be said that if our hearers are true Christians there can be no occasion to exercise persuasion in their behalf. But a man's views of God may be made fuller and clearer. A believer in Christ may have his faith increased, his religious principles strengthened, and his religious character established. His moral state and conduct may be indefinitely improved. If he does well he may be induced to do so more earnestly and faithfully, and above all he may be led to do so under the influence of true re-

ligion; and thus his moral conduct may be converted into true holiness. There is a great change when a morally good man becomes holy.

Even if your hearers have as much saving knowledge and excellence as you have yourself, you have still to promote their growth in the knowledge and grace of God. You are surely not the standard to which you wish them to be conformed; the Word of God is the true standard.

You may also seek to promote their spiritual happiness. You may stimulate them to seek their highest enjoyment in religion, even in this world. The very best are so far from having reached the true ideal that the Christian life at best may be considered a labor and conflict.

Thus rhetoric is not self-contained; it always seeks something beyond itself, something in relation to which it is merely a means. It is an intensely earnest and practical thing.

It is this essentially practical tendency or direction —this seeking something beyond itself—that distinguishes it from philosophy, poetry, painting and sculpture. In philosophy you may present clearly the truth and the proof of it, you may use the absolutely strongest arguments you have; you need not select and arrange them to excite emotion and influence the will. You do not require to consider the character, maxims and circumstances of your hearers. Philosophy has for its object the discovery and presentation of truth for its own sake. Rhetoric, on the other hand, presents and applies truth for the sake of the influence it is desired to exert. If the

philosopher desires to convert men to his views, and to exert a practical influence on them, he must present truth rhetorically. Thus his system acquires a mixed character.

In poetry the writer's idea is presented in the most beautiful form for its own sake. If the description is true to it, and pleases the taste and excites admiration, it is all that is absolutely required. It belongs to aesthetics. "There are many poems, however, that depart from the pure type; didactic, moral, philosophical and scientific poems. These are of a mixed character. When a poem kindles enthusiasm, fire, high and noble aspirations, it has touched the spring of action and becomes eloquence. The greatest compositions are not the pure poems, but those that, without submerging artistic beauty, can both exercise the intellectual powers, and stimulate the active dispositions of the mind."—(Professor Bain.)

Thus while poetry and philosophy may become persuasive, yet this is incidental, not necessary. But rhetorical discourse must persuade; if it fails to do this it departs from its distinguishing characteristic. When the orator beautifies his discourse, it is for the sake of persuasion, to which even beauty must become purely subservient. "We must distinguish oratorical discourse from didactic discourse, which concludes with an idea, and from poetry which has no conclusion, and of which the purpose is not out of itself, but in itself."—(Vinet.) Poetry is an imitative art, deriving its subject from external na-

ture and from human life. Thus it is eminently descriptive. But this is not suitable to oratory. "The orator must present objects in profile, not in statuesque form." When an orator fills up and beautifies his picture, he becomes engrossed in the creation of his own imagination and taste, and loses sight of his audience. Descriptioin presents its objects in the relations of space, and thus has no movement. An elaborate description will arrest the progress of discourse, and will suppress the interest and feeling previously awakened, and which cannot be reproduced in many cases.

This is well known to novel readers, who invariably skip long, descriptive passages, that they may not lose the thread and interest of the plot that is gradually unfolding. "The orator who delights in images and pictures speaks to the imagination of his hearers rather than to their mind and heart. He will effect but little and instruct less. Preachers who delight in continual descriptions, whether of physical or moral nature, make sermons subject to their taste for imagery, which are only galleries or pictures that may amuse, but can never instruct or touch any one."—(Bautain.)

The same may be said of painting and statuary which merely embody the artist's idea for its own sake. These arts in many cases tend to refine and ennoble the mind; but this is not their grand aim or distinctive quality as fine arts, but one of their incidental results. Thus the practical end and distinctive character of rhetorical discourse is persuasion. For this it invents its subject, explains, proves

and beautifies it. "The orator is not a man of words and pictures—of paint and drapery—but he is a man of ideas, sentiments and high and noble purposes. He does not address the imagination but the whole mind of his hearers, understanding, sensibility and will. The true orator is a leader and reformer of men, and a mighty power for good in the world and in the Church."

Rhetoric has no rules to give in reference to elocution. But, indirectly, a properly constructed discourse will greatly aid delivery. And, if the heart is suitably affected by the subject, and towards the hearers, it will greatly aid delivery, making it natural and easy. In fact a preacher must speak from the heart to the heart.

Bishop Whately says that no rules can be given for gesture. Gesture is used to give emphasis to words or sentiments. But he says that the gesture should precede the sentiment which it is intended to render emphatic, as if the speaker were unable to give sufficient emphasis by the use of words. He also declares that gesture taught by rules always comes after the sentiment when it is not needed, and can do nothing but harm. Gesture should spring from great earnestness, and thus be natural.

The close relation of logic to rhetoric has already been indicated. It furnishes principles which guide in explanation and proof. The relation of ethics to rhetoric is seen in what should be the grand end of rhetorical discourse, its moral purpose. Its relation to aesthetics was at one time much insisted on. Dr. Blair treated rhetoric as a department of aesthet-

ics, having mainly to do with the beautiful and sublime. Traces of merited contempt for it thus incurred are still to be found. Rhetoric does not belong to Logic, Aesthetics, or Ethics; it merely pre-supposes them, assumes them, and develops itself in conformity to their principles. "In respect of the matter of discourse, Rhetoric derives its regulative principles mainly from Logic; in respect to the form of discourse from Aesthetics; in respect of the end of discourse from Ethics."—(Day.)

There are some peculiarities in religious discourse that are worthy of special notice. These are not, however, such as to affect its rhetorical structure.

One peculiarity is that the preacher has to find his subject, whereas the politician has his prescribed for him. The latter knows precisely what principles of trade or legislation his party is pledged to contend for. He has probably a pecuniary interest in the success of his party. Thus his subject is a definite one, and it is clearly set forth by his leaders. The same is true of the lawyer. He has his client to defend. This furnishes a specific subject.

Another peculiarity is that the lawyer or politician has not to awaken an interest in his subject. The country from one end to the other is thoroughly aroused and excited. People will listen with the most intense interest for hours or days while the excitement lasts. It is well known what an interest is awakened by state and criminal trials and what importance is attached to the reports thereof in the newspapers. Whereas, a minister is called upon to

address audiences which are comparatively uninterested, unaffected and not pervaded by one tone of feeling.

On the other hand, the preacher has matter prescribed to him in the Word of God, and that of the deepest interest to an awakened mind, and more than enough to last a lifetime. He has the testimony of God, from which there is no appeal. This must appear in the sermon. Thus he has not to present long trains of reasoning in setting forth truths and duties, which would be fatal to eloquence, being necessarily addressed to the understanding. Further, his desire should be kind. The Gospel message is a message of love, sent even to those who rebel against Divine authority.

Then the Gospel message is suited to man in a state of guilt and sin and misery. It is the most affecting of all subjects. However erroneous his hearers' views may be or however bad their conduct, he must not consider them enemies, or denounce violently their errors or views; but he must view them with kindness and compassion, and seek to address his discourse to any good that is in them, whether actual or potential, and pray them to be reconciled to God. It is a mistake to suppose that it is the design of a preached Gospel merely to reform men's conduct. Its design is to change their hearts, to purify the secret springs of religious feeling in their hearts.

Another thing to be noticed is that the Gospel minister seeks to be instrumental in effecting a permanent change of character. The fact that he

seeks the permanent good of his hearers must necessarily make his oratory more didactic than that which is secular. The more permanent the impression aimed at, the more ample must be the information, the more clear and accurate the arrangement of it, and the more deeply must it be lodged in the mind. It must be sufficient not merely to influence a vote or verdict, but to be the ruling principle in a man's whole future life.

It should also be noticed that a minister's discourse terminates on his hearers; when he seeks to persuade them it is for their personal welfare, while the secular orator's speech is aimed at something ulterior. The statesman does not seek the moral improvement or the happiness of the members of parliament, but seeks merely their aid to pass a bill which he advocates. The lawyer does not seek the welfare of judge or jury, but merely a verdict in favor of his client, whose paid advocate he is.

It is easy to see that these various kinds of oratory do not affect the structure or nature of rhetoric or persuasive discourse. But the great advantage the minister has over the secular orator in the higher aim, the purer motive, the more affecting matter, is manifest and should be taken into account. Let his heart be filled and enflamed with his message, so that he can speak from, and to the heart. Let him have confidence in the Word and Spirit of God, let his heart be filled with zeal for the glory of God, and let him trust in the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, and he may be sure that the people will hear him gladly.

OBJECTIONS TO AND UTILITY OF HOMILETICAL CULTURE

CHAPTER III

OBJECTIONS TO AND UTILITY OF HOMILETICAL CULTURE

We shall now consider objections to the study of homiletics, i. e., the use of rhetoric in the construction of religious discourse. Our design in stating these is, of course, to refute them; but our ultimate and main design is to reveal more fully the nature and importance of the rhetorical presentation of practical truth. Objections to any system tend to explain it. A person who thoroughly understands a subject should be competent to speak for or against it. Rhetoric has often been blamed for making the worse seem the better part. But this is not a rhetorical but a moral fault, which no good man will commit. Let truth and error have an equally fair representation, truth must have the advantage as it is stronger than error.

(1) Many consider rhetorical art dishonorable, because, they say it blinds the judgment, excites passions, impairs self-control, and moves the hearer sometimes like a machine. Hence, those who hold this opinion think that the understanding alone should be addressed.

In this there is, no doubt, a mixture of truth and error. But it is easy to see that this is the perver-

sion of rhetorical skill. To say that it is liable to abuse is no valid argument against anything, especially its legitimate use. It is surely wrong to excite violent and ungovernable passion. But such passion is of no use at all to one who preaches the Gospel, and seeks to accomplish a good moral purpose. Still, the objection is valid against all direct excitation of passion, all sensationalism, and the use of cunning and deceptive tricks.

If you use the instrumentality of truth, especially religious truth, and apply it to the understanding, no compulsion, in this case, can be exercised. You excite in this way moral feelings which are voluntary. The hearer has self-control. He is willing to be thus influenced; he feels that his personal liberty is respected. He feels that the excitation is wholesome and salutary. If he is a good man, or desires to become a good man, he is grateful for it.

When people hear the Gospel preached they desire to feel its influence in their hearts. If a preacher cannot so present it as to excite religious affection, they feel that he is not competent to edify them. This is the opinion of intelligent Christians. The excitation of religious feeling does not interfere with a man's liberty. Indeed, the mind is never conscious of greater freedom than when influenced by the excitation of religious affection.

I would not assent to Archbishop Whately, who contends that there is no use in seeking to excite a man's feelings directly, as he is then put on his guard, and he will resist the excitation; hence you must trust rather to a side-thrust, taking him una-

wares. I entirely disclaim such a sentiment. If I wish to excite pious and benevolent affection, I am quite willing that my hearers should understand this. I would address them in such a way as to secure their assent from the beginning. No man can be made better against his will. Christ makes men willing in the day of His power. Compulsion is entirely out of place in the sphere of religious affection. You cannot compel a man to love God and hate evil. You cannot compel a man to repent of sins. Before he can repent, he must have a true sense of sin and an appreciation of the mercy of God in Christ. I should be quite willing that my hearers should understand at the outset what affections I desire to excite in their minds. But I would not expressly tell them, as it would be unrhetorical, as it would anticipate the interest of the sermon.

Many say that religion should not be presented in such a way as to excite emotion, because there are many whose minds have been unhinged by religion, who are now in lunatic asylums. But I deny that true religion, properly presented, ever made any person insane. Its tendency is the opposite. It is fitted to relieve the conscience of a load of guilt, to deliver it from the disquieting reign of sin, to bring it into the enjoyment of inward peace and of peace with God, to dispel the darkness of the future and to irradiate it with the light of Heaven. e. g. Our Lord's miracles. It must be a sad perversion of this religion to present it in such a manner as to produce insanity. Further, it is not the rhetorical presenta-

tion of truth that has a tendency to unhinge any man's mind. Persuasive eloquence is not to blame.

The thing that has a tendency to unhinge men's minds is to present to the mind vivid pictures of physical torture, and that to last forever. But fear of suffering is not a religious feeling at all; it is common to us with the inferior animals. Religion shows the evil of sin and the misery of guilt on the conscience, and of the reign of sin in the soul. This is a rational and moral fear. It is awakened by dealing with the understanding and conscience. It is a fear for which the Gospel provides a complete antidote. The Gospel reveals the great atonement that can take all our guilt away; it provides the means by which the soul can be delivered from its power, and brought into the enjoyment of the favor of God. The man discovers a moral element in his misery and is thus prepared to consider a moral remedy. You may excite as much fear as you can, provided it is fear of a moral nature, excited by Gospel truth brought into contact with the understanding and the conscience; and provided that you excite the fear for the express purpose of leading persons to embrace the blessed remedy, which will deliver them from all their fears.

(2) It is said that this study is useless because many effective and successful preachers never prosecuted it.

This is not a valid objection. The effect of preaching is in the heart mainly. Hence it is invisible. Besides, if they are so specially successful

this is no valid objection to rhetoric, if they construct their effective discourses according to rhetorical principles. Men of ability reason correctly, although they have never studied logic. Such reasoning is according to nature. It is genius. But all men have not genius. There is an element of presumption in this. Those who use it as a reason why they should not study, virtually lay claim to genius. Even genius may be corrected, and great ability may be guided. If a man possess genius he should certainly cultivate it. Genius does not exempt from suitable study.

(3) It is said that homiletics hampers the preacher.

This is impossible if its principles are sound. It will not hamper but educate. Empirical rules may hamper, but sound principles cannot. It is strange that a preacher so eminent as Dr. J. W. Alexander should make this objection. But we should know to what books on homiletics he referred. Besides, although Dr. Alexander's sermons are excellent, yet careful examination will reveal that if they had been accurately conformed to correct rhetorical principles they would have been better than they are.

Moreover, it is absurd to say that scientific rhetorical principles can hamper a speaker. It will not hamper him to convince him that he must have a definite and worthy purpose in speaking, that he must have suitable material clearly and correctly arranged in order to gain his purpose, and that he must satisfy the understanding before he seeks to

excite emotion, and must excite emotion before he can influence the will. These are the fundamental principles of persuasive discourse. Would a person experience greater freedom were he allowed to deal first with the will by exhortation, and then seek to produce excitation and conclude with a calm address to the understanding? As well might an architect demand liberty to make a pyramid stand on its apex, or a church upon its steeple. No wonder that Voltaire considered it an evidence of the inspiration of the Bible that it had so long survived the treatment that it had received from its preachers.

(4) The fourth objection is much more serious, as it is of a religious nature and has often been insisted on. It is said that the study of homiletics is irreligious, as it implies trust in artificial rhetoric, instead of trust in the Holy Spirit.

But rhetoric is not artificial in a bad sense, i. e., as opposed to natural, because the rhetorical is the most natural form of discourse. Persons reasoned correctly before logic was invented; they spoke persuasively before rhetoric was discovered; and they composed grammatically before grammars were constructed. In these cases nature was followed. Hence when a man reasons correctly, speaks persuasively and grammatically, his discourse is in the best sense natural. An ill-constructed sermon is uninteresting, and it is repugnant to right feeling and purpose; it displeases everyone, hence it must be unnatural. A good discourse is a noble work of art and cannot be otherwise. If a man invents a subject and

elaborates it in his own mind and adapts it to the practical end he has in view and has his heart enflamed by it, it is a work of art. The only way in which he can make a discourse that is not a work of art is to take the first view of a text that occurs to him, and then, without plan or meditation, to state thoughts that happen to occur to him, and these confused and incoherent.

Besides, homiletical skill is quite compatible with trust in Divine grace. An ignorant man is as likely as an educated man to trust in his own powers. There is nothing in proper intellectual culture incompatible with entire trust in God to give testimony to the word of His grace. It is not relevant in this connection to quote the Lord's saying to the Apostles, that when brought before governors and kings for his sake they should take no thought how or what they should speak. If ordinary preachers understand this as referring literally to themselves, they cannot expect the fulfillment of the Lord's promise until they are arrested and brought before governors and kings. Besides, if it forbids the study of rhetoric, it forbids also the study of the Scriptures or of theology, as they were not merely to take no thought how they should speak, but also what they should speak.

Before concluding this part, I wish to show the utility of homiletical culture to the ministry. This is amply attested by the declaration of the ablest preachers. They acknowledge that those admirable discourses that seem like the inspiration

of genius, are the fruit of persevering study, and of private and protracted meditation and prayer. Their extensive and various reading, their observation of nature and of man, personally and socially, are intelligently and purposely made subservient to the interest and power of their preaching. There are also various *special reasons* why homiletical skill should be acquired at any cost.

One is that the Gospel should be preached as correctly and powerfully as possible. This is due to the subject itself, to the end contemplated, and to preaching as a divine institution. The preaching of the Gospel is, according to the Apostles, the most important work of the ministry. They place it above government, sacraments and the care of the poor (Eph. III:8, I Cor. I:17, Acts VI:4). It is a mistake when a minister spends nearly all his time in acquiring knowledge, and little or none in acquiring the art of communicating it.

Another reason is, that *preaching does not in general seem to give satisfaction.* The reasons for this are not hard to find.

One is that *acceptable preaching is now more difficult than ever.* This is largely due to the diffusion of education and general information. Besides, the preacher has to compete for influence with daily newspapers, public lectures elaborately prepared, and sermons by popular and gifted preachers who are capable of occasional and special efforts. It indicates weakness when ministers complain of the influence of the press. There is no fear that the press will ever supersede the pulpit. In the Dark Ages,

when there was no press, there was no preaching; now while presses are multiplied there is more preaching than ever. Truth presented by the living voice of the preacher and by his expressive countenance, has an immense advantage over what is presented on a printed page.

Another reason is to be found in the *spirit of the age.* This is an age of extraordinary excitement in all departments of thought and activity; and hence it complains of lack of zeal in the pulpit. It is also an age of skepticism. Hence, many who hate evangelical doctrine profess aversion only to the manner of preaching it, and declare that preaching has lost its power, and has survived its interest and usefulness. It is evident that preaching is now in a state of transition. Hitherto it has been too didactic. There has been too much stiffness and formality in the construction of discourse, and in the announcement of its leading divisions. Its address has been too much confined to the understanding, and it has demanded an amount of thought and attention that people are unable or unwilling to give. Thus, it is not as attractive as it should be.

This has been painfully felt by preachers. Consequently, many have had recourse to external things to attract and interest, such as artistic music and church adornment. Some have greatly reduced the amount of Scripture truth in their sermons, have adopted a kind word painting style, a theatrical delivery and even painted scenery, to illustrate Scripture themes. Others, despairing

even of such attractions, seem to put forth their utmost efforts to amuse and attract the young, preaching to them specially, forming societies among them, and furnishing amusement for them in week-evening meetings, thus virtually surrendering all hope of doing elderly persons any good. There is a feeling, too, that a crowd must be collected, that people must be induced to come to church—as if they are to convert one another—while there is less thought of edifying them there.

Now, all these means of contending with the evil complained of are based on the fundamental mistake that there is anything in the world more powerfully and permanently attractive than the Gospel of God's grace. Let its doctrines be presented rhetorically, let them be brought into living contact with the whole mind, and their power and attraction will soon be felt. Paul's remedy for those who will not endure sound doctrine, is simply to preach it to them in season and out of season. If they shrink from the labor of close attention, let the preacher assume this labor by studying and elaborating his ideas so that they shall become as clear as crystal, and shine in their own light and beauty. Let the preacher's heart be inflamed with the truth which he speaks; let him have confidence in his office and doctrine, and in the promise of the Holy Spirit and let him be filled with zeal for his hearer's welfare and God's glory, and then he may expect that people, instead of being uninterested, will have their hearts burn within them. When a man who has such a Gospel to preach, such

a remedy to present, such assurance of Divine aid, complains that people are not attracted and interested, he merely condemns himself. Let the people be taught that it is their duty and privilege to attend church to worship God; and not merely to receive instruction which they might obtain from books, but to hear the truth earnestly proclaimed, according to Christ's appointment, and officially by His ambassadors; and to receive those spiritual influences which are needed and promised to render the preaching of the Gospel effectual unto salvation.

The remedy for this state of things is to be found in the Gospel itself. The Gospel is the most interesting thing in the world. It is also the most powerful. It is our sheet anchor. If we lose it we shall be cast on a stormy, rock-bound sea, without chart or compass or beacon. Let the Gospel be preached fully and powerfully in its bearing on man's life and his eternal destiny. Let it be applied to the conscience and heart; and its power will soon be felt.

SUBJECT AND TEXT

CHAPTER IV

SUBJECT AND TEXT

It is easy to see that if a man is to speak at all he must have a subject; and this subject must be definite if he expects to produce a definite impression. If he preaches at the same time on several subjects, his discourse will be incoherent; if he preaches without a subject, his discourse will be chaotic.

The subject, being generally a short sentence, is apt to be overlooked. But it is far more than an ordinary sentence. It should be composed with the greatest care; nothing essential should be omitted, and nothing superfluous should be added. To compose it correctly is as important as to compose the whole discourse correctly. A long, verbose, trailing, clumsy subject will probably lead to the composition of a sermon having the same qualities.

The subject should contain in a concentrated form the substance of the whole sermon, with all its interest, power and beauty. Hence, nothing can be legitimately introduced into the sermon that does not explain, prove or illustrate the subject. Not to distinguish a subject from an ordinary sentence is as great a mistake as not to distinguish an acorn from a piece of wood of the same size and form. Speaking figuratively, were you to view the subject through

a powerful magnifying glass, you should be able to see the whole sermon, in its grand outlines, at least.

Of course the invention of the subject must require a great and sometimes protracted effort. It is a work of creative power. By this process the material you have in your mind, or which you can obtain from external sources, is that upon which the inventive faculty is exercised. When this faculty is intelligently exercised, a confused mass is reduced to order, symmetry and beauty. The great labor connected with the making of a sermon is then accomplished. What remains to be done is a labor of love, and it is performed with ease and alacrity. The sermon will then be the preacher's own, bearing the impress of his mind; and the delivery of it will be natural and impressive.

It can easily be seen that it is not proper to ask a man to invent a subject instantly. This is not a legitimate test of knowledge or ability. Invention may sometimes occur with the velocity and vividness of a flash of lightning; at other times it may require days or weeks. Much time and labor, therefore, must be devoted to the invention of the subject. The mental conflict involved in this process is due to the exercise of creative power, and it is the condition of the preacher's inspiration, of the ease with which he will compose and remember his sermon, and of the effective manner in which he will deliver it. To shirk this labor must be fatal both to personal improvement, and to powerful and effective preaching.

There are various things in favor of having a text as well as a subject. Our Lord in the synagogue at Nazareth set the example of preaching from a text. Luke IV:16. The Apostles also used texts, necessarily taken from the Old Testament, as they had to prove that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah.

Paul's discourse at Athens was an exception. He had no text. This was due to the character of his audience, and also to the circumstance that they were not acquainted with the Old Testament. The fact that the Lord and His Apostles preached on texts found in the Old Testament shows the relation in which the Old Testament stands to the New, and also the permanent value of the former. It has manifest advantages.

(1) It places a preacher in his true position as a minister of the Word. It reminds him that he is not to preach his own speculations, or take into the pulpit anything he pleases, but to preach the preaching that the Lord bids him. If a man introduces non-Scriptural themes into the pulpit, the text lying before him rebukes his presumption. It teaches him to be humble and to feel his accountability to God.

(2) It also imparts authority to the sermon. The sermon is not only confirmed by the general testimony of Scripture; but there is express and direct authority in the text in which the preacher finds his subject. This is fitted to make the people take heed to what they hear; and also to give confidence to the preacher, who preaches not in his own name, but in the name of the Lord, who has promised to give testimony to the word of His grace.

(3) There is another advantage in preaching from texts. It gives endless variety, which characterizes both the Word and works of God. It also teaches the preacher to present the Gospel as it is set forth in the Word of God. This freshness or variety is not so manifest as it should be, because preachers are not careful to find in the text the specific subject which it contains, and that, too, modified and colored by its environment. Frequently the same subject is preached from a great many texts, making the same thing over and over again, no matter what the text may specially mean.

If a subject as well as a text is required, it may be asked, "why are many good sermons preached merely on texts?" In many sermons the subject is latent; it is present, although not enunciated. On the other hand, there are many texts that have unity and rhetorical structure. Consequently if a man adheres faithfully to his text he will make a good sermon.

But even when a text has the form of a subject, *invention is still needed.* e. g. "By grace ye are saved, "Salvation is gratuitous." But the question is, how is this to be discussed? Is the gratuitous nature of salvation to be analyzed? Or is the statement to be proved? In what form or by what arguments is it to be discussed? Hence, even when the text has the form of a subject, there is still need of invention. The matter has still to be taken up and elaborated in the mind. The subject must have unity, as will be explained in due time.

But how can a person see that there is unity in the parts, if he does not perceive parts at all? Thus the subject is organic in its structure.

The distinction between text and subject can best be made plain by examples. When examples are given a method of discussion will generally be found stated in these, but we shall use them, at present, merely to show the difference between a text and a subject. Method, properly so designated, belongs to the second part. Hence, we do not want to anticipate the discussion of it now. We state the examples fully to make them clearer and also to prepare examples of method to be used subsequently.

We would state, incidentally, that when we present methods it is not specially to furnish models on which sermons may be constructed, but to endeavor to assist in acquiring such knowledge and skill as shall enable the preacher to construct methods for himself suited to his own resources, tastes and spiritual perception at the time of writing.

Our meaning may be better understood by relating a conversation which I had with a professor of systematic theology, one of the ablest theologians whom I have ever met and one who taught homiletics. He said that he had not dealt with rhetorical principles at all; but he had suggested a great many good texts and had divided them for the students, so that they might find in the class matter enough for the first year of their ministry.

Now this looks like filling a tank or cistern that will soon dry up, instead of opening up a perennial

fountain, that, although tiny at first, will increase in width and depth throughout its entire course.

Examples: Heb. XII:14. Were you to take this for your text, what would the subject properly be? You might say, to follow peace and holiness. But peace between man and man, and holiness are different things. Thus you could not have strict unity, were you to discuss both exhortations.

You might, indeed, find two independent subjects in the text, on each of which you could make a sermon, because both are separately inculcated in the Word of God.

If you are to take the whole text you must find some connection between these exhortations. They are clearly not co-ordinate, but the latter may very properly modify the former. We know the quarrelsome nature of these Jews, their special and implacable hostility to the Gentiles. In this way they constantly brought themselves into trouble. Even Jewish Christians, according to the Apostle James, were to blame for this. It was necessary, therefore, as Peter shows, that they should become peaceable citizens in the countries in which they were dispersed. They are thus exhorted, as earnestly as possible, to follow peace with all men. The word used is diokete i. e., to pursue it as hunters pursue wild beasts, or as persons pursue criminals or debtors.

Now, if it was their duty to follow peace thus, they might seek to conform to heathenish practices and burn incense before idols. Or they might, for the sake of peace, conceal their principles, as very

many did in Elijah's time, to escape the bloody persecution of Jezebel. The second exhortation corrects this and declares that they must not sacrifice principle or a good conscience, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

There is tremendous pressure here. They were to pursue peace as earnestly as possible, to sacrifice their interests, their comforts and even life itself, if need be, but not to sacrifice religious principle as they hoped to be admitted into Heaven. There is here a limitation, a line drawn, beyond which they must not go. But this very limitation shows the intense earnestness with which peace must be pursued.

You see then the difference between a text and a subject. The concise text actually contains three subjects, any one of which may be legitimately preached on, although the last is the specific subject of the text, and fairly exhausts it. If you do not make the distinction pointed out you will probably be involved in hopeless confusion.

John III:16 has been discussed thus: "The giver, the gift, the motive in bestowing it, the design in bestowing it, the condition to be complied with on our part."

It is easy to see that there is no definite subject here stated. There is merely a division of the words of the text. This method is purely mechanical and requires neither logic nor rhetoric. But a subject is expressly stated in the text; it is, "God's great love to sinners, evinced, first, by the gift of His Son;

second, by His design in bestowing this gift." This subject is plainly suggested by the Lord Himself. His design is to prove the greatness of God's love to our sinful race.

There are two proofs of the love of God. One is the gift, elsewhere called "His unspeakable gift," involving the greatest sacrifice that could be made. He gave Him to death for us. He was most dear to His Father, His only begotten Son—a Son who stood in a relation to God in which no creature, however exalted, could stand. The other proof is furnished by the blessedness which He procured for His people—stated both negatively and affirmatively.

The one proof may be called *proximate*, the other *ulterior*. The great gift is enhanced by the freeness of it. It is bestowed upon all who, by faith, accept it. Still we cannot co-ordinate this with the other two proofs. This eternal life would still be an unspeakably great gift, should a man give all his property to procure it, or lay down his life for it, as great numbers of martyrs have done.

But the acceptance of it by faith, as a gratuitous thing, might properly form an application of the subject. The other method suggested, although rhetorically possible, would have the disadvantage of obscuring the greatness of the love of God, which is our Lord's prominent idea. The grand idea underlying the whole is that it is essential to love to make sacrifices for its objects, or to be willing to do so, and also to desire and seek their happiness. This is the nature of all the love that is worthy of the name. Love is the opposite pole to selfishness.

It is clear that the preacher should find his subject in the specific and most important idea in his text; and that, too, colored or modified by its environment. This is the way to treat the text respectfully. It is the only way in which you can secure in your preaching the endless variety that is contained in the Word of God, and avoid the danger of preaching on, and endlessly repeating, mere commonplaces.

On the principle now stated it is clear that the subject of our text is not faith, but the greatness of the love of God and the most conclusive proof of it. If you wish to preach on faith, you will find plenty of texts in which it is the specific and most prominent idea.

Luke XIV:15-24: Subject, "The refusal of the invitation on the part of those addressed, is the only thing that will finally exclude from the blessedness of the Kingdom."

Prove first.—That the things that are generally supposed to exclude are no obstacles; second, that those first invited reveal this in their apology which refers only to worldliness. The men's words were not intended to change the subject, but were suggested by the Lord's statement. The Lord had spoken of a recompense at the resurrection of the just, i. e., an invitation to a far better feast. Christ is the servant; there was only one at the great feast. His glory shines forth at the 22d verse.

Many think that they will be excluded by personal unworthiness, want of provision for so many, want of willingness on the part of the Host. The

parable excludes all these things. The persons invited virtually admit that the love of the world is the reason for not accepting the invitation. Their own words indicate this.

Application: Blessedness freely offered. Folly of neglecting the great salvation. Still we hear the kind and pressing invitation.

This is entirely different from a sermon I heard some time ago. The preacher discussed the text thus: First, the speaker; second, the person spoken to; third, the thing spoken. The thing spoken is surely the subject here. This style of preaching was very common a century ago in Scotland. I did not think that a single case of it had survived until this date.

Should one wish to preach on the 17th verse he might consider:

1. The Exhortation, "Come to the prepared feast."

2. Enforce the exhortation by showing that your hearers, no matter what their character may be, should consider themselves invited; and also by showing that the invitation is in every respect most reliable and encouraging, as it is given by God Himself.

Proverbs XXIII:17-18.

The invention of the subject is important here. I seize the fear of God as the central thing here; and from this I develop a rhetorical subject. This takes up all that is in the text, and presents it in a manner suited to popular apprehension and impression.

"The nature of this fear in a truly religious mind; and the blessedness flowing from its influence."

I. There is the fear of offending God and its consequences. (a) God is a being of infinite greatness and excellence. He is very near to us. He is infinite in holiness. There is nothing in the Gospel to diminish this religious fear: God in applying the remedy renews the heart and puts this fear into it. (b) Fear of the consequences of offending God; the loss of God's favor, the injury and ruin of the mind itself.

II. "The blessedness flowing, etc." (a) It suppresses all envious and disquieting feelings. (b) Produces assurance that all things will end well, that our hopes will not be blasted. Improvement—How anxious should we be to possess this holy affection. How sad is the condition of mind in which there is no fear of God.

This method will produce an impression such as cannot be made by explaining the words as they stand in the text. To secure unity in this and in many similar cases, it is necessary to subordinate one or more topics to another, which is made supreme. This subordination is not disrespectful to such topics, as it is not ethical but purely rhetorical. This will be explained in due time.

Gal. I: 4, 5. "The supreme importance of being rescued from this present evil world," i. e., The world of mankind in its sinful state.

I. Christ gave himself for our sins to deliver us from this present evil world: (a) viewed as guilty

before God; (b) as sinful or morally corrupt; (c) as miserable.

II. Such deliverance is most desirable in its own nature. Other things may help us to realize this; Christ gave himself for our sins that he might, etc. It was according to the will of God and our Father, and most glorifying to Him. Improvement—We must either be rescued or ruined. Christians should estimate the greatness of salvation by what Christ thought of it, and suffered for it.

The subject here stated presents the substance and spirit of the text in a practical form. And it includes and utilizes all that is stated in these verses. When this is done, all things fall into their proper positions in an orderly manner. All things are clear and consecutive, interest is increased as you advance, and it culminates in a doxology. Thus you have the spirit of the passage.

Jer. XXXI: 31-34.

The abounding mercy of the Lord in pardoning all His people's sins and putting His law in their inward parts and writing it in their hearts is the condition of their perseverance in a truly religious life. This includes all that is stated in the text, and is so arranged as to be easily discussed. The discussion of this subject is fitted to make a deep and permanent impression on a religious audience.

These examples are sufficient to explain and illustrate the difference between a text and a subject, no matter how long a text may be.

The matter of the text is generally in a concrete

form, and cannot be easily discussed or proved. It may entirely lack unity and practical aim. Thus persons who have only texts—not subjects—are apt to make discourses in which the ideas are confused, incoherent, and aimless.

On the other hand, the subject is invented out of the subject-matter of the text. It is to this extent a product of thought; it is elaborated in the mind acting according to the laws of thought. It thus acquires organic structure; it is easily analyzed and proved; and it makes an impression on the preacher's heart, and thus readily follows the principles of rhetoric. Were this correctly apprehended, preachers would soon learn to present everything in a practical or rhetorical aspect, and all the parts of discourse in one field of view.

In this way a great amount of solid doctrine can be presented in a rhetorical form so that no one can ever complain of lack of interest, or complain that his reasoning powers are unduly taxed, or that the matter is too didactic. Many seem to think that to make a discourse rhetorical, one must put as little Scripture doctrine into it as possible. They seem to consider that a subject is merely a frame on which they may hang their ornaments or conceits. If skill in this department is not acquired, a person will be apt to fall into a didactic or a sensational manner of preaching, neither of which is rhetorical. The distinction insisted upon between a text and a subject is of great value to the sermonizer. The

difference consists not in substance so much as in rhetorical form.

Many, glorying in their mental indolence, are disposed to say, it matters not what the form may be, if we present an abundance of edifying matter. As well might a householder make a great feast for his friends, pile in confusion on his table, fish, and great joints of meat, and vegetables of all kinds—some parts of the food burnt almost to a cinder and other parts raw—and say, "there is abundance of good food for you." True, but his guests would be disgusted, they would have no relish for food so badly prepared; and, even if they could find something to eat they would not be able to digest it.

A subject is, to a certain extent, a product of thought. It is easily explained or proved, and makes an impression on both preacher and audience. Hence, although the invention of the subject involves a great and protracted mental effort or conflict, yet it greatly facilitates the construction of a sermon and the remembering and delivering of it. It is time and labor well spent and is the condition of the improvement which should be manifest.

Great importance is attached to the distinction between a text and a subject. Speaking generally, there is practically as great difference as there is between exegesis and rhetoric. In exegesis you address the understanding, in rhetoric you address the whole mind—understanding, sensibility and will. In the one, you seek to impart instruction; in the other, you seek also to produce an impression.

It is difficult to persuade ministers to preach on subjects, and equally difficult to convince them that they need not present a subject in a dry, abstract form. They shrink from this because it requires the invention of a subject out of the matter of the text. This involves great, and sometimes, protracted mental effort. It is a great blessing, however, that the Bible does not contain Subjects but Matter in which subjects are to be found. Persons do not expect to find nuggets of gold and precious stones lying on the surface of the earth. They are willing to sink deep shafts and are glad when they find gold or diamonds in the mine. So with the discovery of precious subjects in the Word of God.

The distinction now indicated between the subject and the text will help to determine the relation in which they should stand to each other. Except in a few cases they cannot be identical. Hence it is not necessary that the subject should exhaust the text, although the discussion must exhaust the subject. The latter is due to the very nature of the subject as embodying the entire matter of the sermon in a concentrated form. Of course, if the subject is explanatory, to leave out one or two of the attributes comprised in it must be a fatal defect. For example, to speak of the love of God and to leave out the element of complacency, would omit the peculiar affection with which God regards His children, so far as they are sanctified and assimilated to Himself. To speak of man as rational, and fail to distinguish his active powers would be defective.

To prove only a part of a complex subject would be a grave, and probably, a fatal defect. Therefore, the subject must be exhausted. This is due to its very nature as a subject, and it needs no proof. But the subject need not exhaust the text.

This is opposed to the dictum of old writers which is that "A sermon must give the entire sense of the whole text, in order to which it must be considered in every view."

Claude was a French pastor and one of the oldest writers on homiletics. His design in the dictum quoted was evidently to compel preachers to adhere to their texts as closely as possible, and thus secure evangelical preaching. Vain hope! Men who do not love evangelical truth cannot be held by mechanical rules. Yet an old Scotchman, being asked if his pastor were sound, replied, "He is always sound when he has a sound text."

To present a text, in every view, is in many cases a rhetorical impossibility. Instead of doing so, you may present a particular aspect of it. It is not necessary that a subject should contain a proposition, yet it should be such as can be so stated. Claude also contended that every Subject should contain a proposition, such phrases as "the love of God," "precious faith," "all the words of this life," or "obedience to the faith," etc., as they assert nothing were ruled out by him. But this is unreasonable as propositions can easily be made out of these. You can analyze the love of God, and thus assert

its constituent attributes. Or you may present proofs of the love of God.

While there may be several important ideas in a text, you may include them in your sermon if you can, or as many as you please. But you need not exhaust your text. Its full meaning, however, should be stated, and the ideas which you do not intend to discuss should be respectfully waived. We should, however, preach only on the main idea in a text. This is a respectful treatment of the text. To preach on a subordinate idea is not so. It is better to select a text in which the subject on which you wish to speak is the leading idea. This will save a great deal of explanation.

The subject should preserve the individuality of the text. This will give great and pleasing variety. The subject will be as concrete as possible which will be a great advantage. Thus excellent qualities are presented in concrete examples. e. g. Meekness in Moses, patience in Job, faith in Abraham, early piety in David, Obadiah and Timothy.

The spirit of the text should be preserved. This is as important in oratory as it is in music or painting. How painful often is the incongruity between a hymn and the tune sung to it! What incongruity there would be in a painting representing a ship foundering in a storm, were the sea beyond as smooth as glass and the foliage of the trees on the shore unruffled! The subject must be in harmony with the text and its environment.

As this is the Biblical method of preaching it

should guide us in inventing subjects as concrete as the case admits of. In this case many apt illustrations will be found in the context. This demands the special attention of the preacher, as he is apt to suppose that if he is to invent a subject it should be as abstract as possible and thus as dissimilar to the text as possible.

The text should never be treated as merely the motto of the sermon. There is in this no true connection between the text and the subject, and, as it is understood that the text furnishes the authority for the sermon, if there is no proper connection between the one and the other it would be unwise and even dishonest to use a text at all. The man who so treats the Word of God should never preach. Besides, this method impairs respect for the Word of God no matter how well it may be explained. If these simple remarks are understood and acted upon the subject will derive authority, interest, variety and beauty from the text.

The Divine authority which the subject derives from the text must be proportionate to the closeness and vitality of the connection between them. If the preacher does not understand the meaning of the text, his subject will derive no authority from it, no matter how good his intention may be. If his subject is found in a partial misapprehension of the text, of course this must seriously impair the divine authority of the subject. Besides, it is not to be expected that the Holy Spirit will bless preaching on a subject that does not express His mind.

Thus the ignorance or carelessness of the preacher will deprive the audience of the spiritual nourishment that the text contains, and will make the preacher himself blameworthy. It is a dangerous thing, especially for a preacher, to handle the Word of God carelessly.

It is plain that if divine authority is to be obtained from the text, the text must be the Word of God or in harmony with it. In one sense the whole Bible may be called the Word of God; although it contains some sayings of wicked men, of men who were not inspired, and even of devils, yet these, though recorded for wise purposes were not sanctioned. But we use "The Word of God" here in a restricted sense to indicate that God has spoken for our guidance in all the matters of faith and practice.

For example, it would be wrong to preach on John IX:31, "That God will not hear the prayer of an unconverted man," because these are words of an uninspired man. These words are not in harmony with the Word of God, nor do they indicate even what the man meant. What the man meant was that God heareth not impostors as the Jews declared Christ to be. See Jonah III:8-10; Acts II:21; VIII:22. Such sayings, if suitable for texts, may be preached on, if they are in harmony with the Word of God. This principle shows how we may use as texts the sayings of Job's friends who were reproved by God. It was not so much the principles contained in them as the application of them to Job's case that was censured.

Even when the text is the Word of God we must be careful to ascertain if it is correctly rendered in our version, as also to discover its true meaning. The original should always, if possible, be consulted. You will often in this case find that the subject you have chosen is not in the text at all. Here is ample room for criticism and exegesis. The confidence of the people in the authorized version should not, however, be unnecessarily weakened; nor should their patience be exhausted nor their thoughts distracted by criticism which should be prosecuted in the study, only its rich and edifying fruits being reserved for public discourse. The context should be carefully studied to ascertain the true meaning, and also, in many cases, to find a subject.

For example, when preaching on Jude VV:20-21, you might take for your subject, "The duty devolving on Christians to keep themselves in the love of God, as here indicated; and the immense advantages of so doing." Or, in view of the context, the subject may be, "The grand antidote to seductive errors and sinful conduct, here referred to." It is not contending directly against error and sin, but striving to keep the heart right, depending on divine grace, and aspiring to eternal life through the mercy of Christ. Notice the same principle in II Peter III:17-18.

To illustrate how your subject can derive divine authority from the text we have shown that the passage out of which the subject is invented must be the

Word of God in the restricted sense, or in harmony with it. Another principle on which we insist is that there *must be vital or logical connection between the subject and the text.* If there is not this there is no authority for your subject. It is therefore not honest to preach from a text a doctrine which the text does not contain, no matter how sound or Scriptural the doctrine may be. e. g. To preach on total depravity from Isaiah I:5, 6, or on Christ's ability to save the greatest sinners from Heb. VII:25, or on indecision, from I Kings XVIII:21, or on the preaching of the Gospel under the Old Testament, from Heb. IV:2, or from Ps. LXVIII:11.

This rule is transgressed when texts are allegorized, or spiritualized. If a text does not contain some principle fit to be the subject of discourse without allegorizing it, it is not a suitable text; e. g. preaching on the perseverance of the saints from the words "faint yet pursuing," using the blowing of horns at the taking of Jericho to represent preaching the Gospel, and preaching on Christian graces as symbolized by the water pots in which the water was turned into wine. These historical passages have a meaning of their own, but when spiritualized they are converted into myths.

It is unfortunate when a preacher forms this allegorizing habit. He is apt to lose the power of distinguishing his own fancies from the Word of God, and also to give up all proper study of the Word of God, as he finds his resources not so much in it as in his own imagination. It is most offensive to

cultivated minds as it is in very bad taste. Why should we offend people of culture and refinement? They listen cheerfully to the plainest preaching that suits the generality; why should we not respect their feelings?

There is an admirable essay by John Foster on the reasons why evangelistic preaching is objectionable to cultivated minds. I read it when a student and it produced an impression on my mind which has never been effaced. He traces all the vulgarity of which he complains to allegorizing or spiritualizing. For example, if, in the text, spiritual blessings are likened to a feast there is no need to refer to the various courses on the table, the various kinds of food and various kinds of cookery, all of which are assumed to have spiritual significance. In this way much of the time allotted to the sermon is spent, and all the interest. Why does not the preacher confine himself to higher analogies? Why not confine himself to the spiritual things referred to, if there is to be any edification at all? Why not find the moral of the spiritual truth and explain and unfold it?

Besides, this bad practice tends to introduce doctrinal error. A mystical and allegorical manner of speaking of the Lord's Supper led to the Romish perversion of it. The same thing now leads some to attach saving efficacy to its observance, while it debars from the Lord's Table others who are timid.

Origen developed this system of exegesis. He attributes to the Scriptures a three-fold sense: (1)

A somatic, literal or historic sense, furnished immediately by the meaning of the words, but only serving as a veil for a higher sense; (2) a psychical or moral sense, animating the first, and serving for general edification; (3) a pneumatical or mystical and ideal sense, for those who stand on the high ground of philosophical knowledge.

Sound principle does not forbid us to use texts in which a spiritual meaning is plainly intended, as in the Parables of our Lord. But the parables were not intended to beautify discourse but to conceal for a time what people could not understand. See our Lord's own statement of this, Matt. XIII:10-13.

Although parables were used by our Lord to teach spiritual truths, yet they are not to be allegorized. The moral of the parable is to be discovered and held fast, and discussed or proved. On this principle we interpreted the parable of the great feast in Luke XIV:15-24. The parables of the lost sheep and the lost piece of silver are intended to set forth the joy of Christ in the conversion of even one sinner. I was once told of an eminent minister in England who, although anxious to preach on the Prodigal Son, never dared to do so because he did not understand what was meant by the father seeing the returning prodigal "a great way off." Luke XV:20. He was evidently desirous of allegorizing the parable and when he could not do that, he fancied that he did not understand it. The Lord Himself sometimes, as in Luke XVIII, when referring to the poor widow seeking redress of wrong from

an unjust judge, explained the parable as He spoke it, that men ought always to pray and not to faint. This, then, is the meaning and utility of this parable.

The Fathers were addicted to it, notably Chrysostom and Augustine. The latter in preaching on the sixty-third Psalm says almost nothing about the psalm, but spends his strength on a cabalistic discussion on the inscription of it, out of which he brings nothing that his imagination did not first put into it. Thus the Bible was converted, in some measure, into a book of riddles. This has been handed down in the literature of the Church from age to age. The taste of the Church being thus vitiated, leads people to delight in silly conceits. There was much of this in the earlier commentaries.

Bishop Trench, following these ancient expositors, errs frequently in treating parables as allegories. His great classical work on the parables is deeply tainted with this spiritualizing. He even justifies it on the ground of the interest it imparts and its utility. Thus in the parables of the lost sheep, the lost money, and the lost son, he finds the doctrine of the Trinity. The Shepherd is Christ, the woman represents the Church in which the Holy Spirits dwells; and the father of the prodigal represents God. This attaches far too much importance to the Church, as if the Spirit could not act independently of the Church. Besides, the Holy Spirit is not here alluded to, and no work such as the Holy Spirit performs is mentioned.

We would treat in the same way what are called Old Testament types of Christ and spiritual things. There are, doubtless, such types; but there is great danger of multiplying types that were never intended to be such. Many consider it an indication of piety to find as many types as possible. Thus they profess to increase the meaning of Scripture. An old writer said "verbum dei debet significare quantum potest." But it is quite possible to make the Word of God signify too much, as it is possible to make an argument that proves too much.

Even if we find genuine types of Christ and spiritual things these should not be allegorized. The Temple was a type of the Church and, indeed, of Christ Himself, but this does not teach that priests and Levites were types of Gospel ministers, nor that the tongs and snuffers had a spiritual significance. The illustration was unduly pressed when, referring to the Church, a Doctor of Divinity spoke of "The architect, the material, the plan, the foundation and the style." Many speak of the brazen serpent as a type of Christ, i. e., designed to represent Christ to the Israelites.

Our only safety is to admit as types only such as are in Scripture used as types or said to be such. Higher analogies only should be taken into account. The connection will indicate the salient points. There are many fine illustrations in passages which are not declared to be typical, as you may find beautiful illustrations in nature. All that is meant is that such passages should not be used as texts, for

they impart no authority to the subjects supposed to be found in them.

As an example of texts that may be legitimately applied to spiritual things, there is the saying of the leper, "If Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean," because leprosy is a type of sin, and our Lord's miracles were signs, and they were designedly emblematical of His power to save the soul from sin and misery. There is no apology for allegorizing a book so full and varied in its teaching as the Bible. Besides, histories and biographies contain valuable lessons which are lost when they are spiritualized. Moreover, the thing is dishonest and it destroys the value and authority of texts altogether.

There is a great difference between a text and an illustration. A text should contain a subject of great value that can be used, not merely for instruction, but also for conviction and persuasion. Hence, many texts furnish illustrations which are not fitted to sustain and prove a powerful subject.

CHOICE OF TEXTS AND SUBJECTS

CHAPTER V

CHOICE OF TEXTS AND SUBJECTS

A much discussed question in the past has been, "Should we choose a text for our subject, or should we choose a subject for our text?" The answer is, "this depends on circumstances." It is merely a matter of convenience with which rhetoric has nothing to do. A text and a subject may occur simultaneously to the mind, but, in general, the one is chosen for the other. A diligent student of theology, or an active pastor who studies the state of his congregation, will find many subjects on which he should preach. Hence, he will have to seek texts suited to his subjects. He may be tempted to apply force to his text to make it fit his subject; and he will be apt to neglect the individuality and spirit of the text, and the light shed on it by the context. On the other hand, the diligent student of Scriptures will find many texts on which he is inclined to preach or texts will find him, forcing themselves on his attention. In such a case a subject must be found in the text. The text will impart its complexion and spirit to both subject and sermon. The subject will seem to grow out of the text, preserving its individuality and beauty.

Few are aware of the great value of a good text.

It is a real treasure to a preacher. It interests and gratifies the hearers. When I speak of a good text, "good" is not used ethically, but merely rhetorically. It greatly aids the memory. If the text is excellent and the subject is invented out of it and indeed is the spirit of it, and if it is discussed and proved in an orderly and correct manner, it is sure to produce a good impression. Such a sermon is a beautiful work of art. When such a text is recalled the subject and sermon are very easily recollected. I have known cases in which texts, and sermons based on them, have been retained in the memory for a great length of time, and, recalled after many years, have always revived the impression made at first. The preacher himself derives as much benefit from such texts as his hearers. He can remember such texts and sermons easily; he can deliver them with pleasure and affection. They are twice blessed. They are also suitable to carry from home and preach among strangers. Many a preacher's reputation is based on one or two texts and the sermons preached on them.

M. Coquerel, a distinguished French preacher, said, "A man's best sermon is the one he can remember most easily." This is not a superficial test. Hence, preachers should regard their texts with great respect and even veneration and affection. The memory is greatly aided by the familiar words of the text; and the subject is remembered on account of its vital connection with it, and the discus-

sion is remembered by the perfect order of the parts and its graceful movement.

Finding a text is often difficult, and sometimes requires as much time as the composition of the sermon. The reason for this is that a text is not truly found till the mind is deeply impressed with it, and a subject is discovered in it; but this is the most severe labor connected with making a sermon, and it should not be grudged. The difficulty is not in the fewness of the texts or their generally inferior quality; but it is due to the fact that an intelligent man does not feel that he has found a text until he has found a valuable and definite subject in it. The mental friction, in this case, will produce a glow of feeling or affection which will be diffused, not merely through the whole sermon, but also in the hearts of the hearers.

It is a pity that the most interesting texts are not chosen. They please at the outset. Persons often spend great labor and ingenuity in finding texts, out of which a subject can scarcely be invented. Ministers often deceive themselves in this matter. They are like a man drilling a hard rock to procure water when there is a living spring close at hand. On hearing such a text read, intense curiosity is often awakened to ascertain what the preacher is going to make of it. A noted preacher in Scotland boasted that he could preach on any text in the Bible, even on the speech of Balaam's ass. Such a man would find many rivals at the present day.

Many, on the other hand, cannot find texts in the

Bible at all. Noticing advertisements of prospective sermons I perceived that one recently settled pastor purposed to preach in the morning on "The bed is too short" and in the evening on "The devil in the church."

When people are thirsting for the Word of Life, it is too bad when a minister preaches on the "Witch of Endor," or "Lot's Wife." Some time ago I heard a minister preaching on the character of Jacob, laboring to prove that he was greatly inferior to Esau. This is contrary to Scripture. Besides, God is pleased in all ages to be known as the God of Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob. We do not need to suppose that Jacob was a converted man at the beginning of his history. Ministers sometimes complain that they have not the influence that ministers were wont to have. Let them preach on more edifying texts, and with commanding ability, and they will soon have no occasion to make such a complaint.

Suggestions:—1st. Splendid, figurative passages should not be chosen in the belief that the subjects which they contain or the sermons made on them will partake of their splendor. They are generally descriptive and do not contain a valuable subject. Their very splendor is, in many respects, a disadvantage. Young preachers are fascinated by such texts as Isaiah VI:1-4, and Rev. I:13-16. But in the one case it is difficult to find a subject except in the plain words of the Seraphim, or in the proof of the Lord's divinity connected with John II:41; and

in the other case, the glory of the Saviour which is revealed is not that which attracts but prostrates. You should always look through the drapery of the figure for a valuable subject; and if you cannot find one you should not preach on the text. Besides, such texts start the preacher at an elevation from which he must descend. Sometimes the descent is so great and sudden that he seems to fall headlong, after which he can scarcely recover his composure.

Second. Texts that favor rhetorical treatment are greatly to be preferred. e. g. If you wish to preach on conversion instead of taking the words "Be converted," you might take in the whole verse, Acts III:19; or the conversion of Paul; or of the thief on the cross, in which you will find deep conviction of sin and exalted views of Christ in His state of deepest humiliation.

You may discuss a doctrine or duty from a doctrinal, experimental, or figurative text. But the more general, abstract, or objective your theme is the dryer your sermon will be; and the more specific, concrete, or subjective it is the more interesting and impressive will be your preaching, and the more closely it will resemble our Lord's.

You thus secure great variety of texts and methods. The best texts are those that are fitted to excite powerful feelings in both preacher and hearers, which lead to high purpose and strenuous efforts. Such texts are psychological. Do not be afraid of them because they are fitted to arouse you. They will do you good and do your reputation good. I

have known one good sermon procure for a man the reputation of being a great preacher, of which many years of bad preaching did not suffice to deprive him.

Presbyterians do not seem inclined to take such texts. They seem to be afraid of them, while preachers of other denominations, wiser in their generation, seize such with avidity. Were our ministers to preach on such texts occasionally, they would be stimulated to great enthusiasm and effort which would improve all their other sermons. Were this habit formed, it would do much to increase the preaching power of our church. While the old Puritan ministers preached at very great length they well understood this matter. Men's minds were full of Old Testament history, biography and experience, which they could turn to good account to illustrate all noble Christian qualities and heroic deeds. Were you to examine the texts preached on by their contemporary ministers in Scotland, you would be astonished at the variety of their texts. The whole Bible seemed to disclose to them its treasures of doctrine, experience and duty. For, in their knowledge of the Bible, and their habitual study of it, they became as Apollos, mighty in the Scriptures.

Considering the general learning and ability of our ministers, they should be the best preachers in the country; yet the palm of popularity is often carried away by men who are, in these respects, greatly inferior. I mentioned this a considerable time ago to a Scotch minister who spent a few years in

Canada. He replied that he had noticed what I referred to, and to account for it said, very shrewdly, "These preachers resemble country shopkeepers who put all their goods in their window." Better this surely, than to conceal them from view, if they expect to succeed in their profession. Still, I would not have preachers always seek such impressive texts. A fair sprinkling of them would suffice.

Third. Texts that have been often preached on are not to be avoided, as they are generally the best, and it would be a loss to be deprived of them. But they must be taken up into the mind and thoroughly elaborated and conformed to its habits of thought, and by earnest meditation made its own. New subjects will be found in them, or subjects that have all the interest and freshness of a discovery. They will be most acceptable if they are suited to your spiritual state at the time. But in reference to such texts, a good commentary should always be consulted. In it you will sometimes find that such texts have been pivots on which great religious controversies have turned. I do not say that you should feel bound to revive such controversies; but you should know what service such texts have rendered to the cause of truth. The study of these will increase your knowledge of exegesis, and prevent you from revealing ignorance which would be damaging. If you would see what power there is in one text fully realized by one man, you will find it in the reformation of the sixteenth century, when one text, "The just shall live by faith," shook the mas-

sive and hoary edifice of Rome to its very foundations.

Fourth. It is important to find new and valuable texts. The Bible is full of such. The man who seeks them with a sincere and reverent spirit and with a view to the church's edification, will often be unexpectedly and richly rewarded. Preaching is too much confined to a few favorite passages, while the vast and precious resources of the Word of God are not explored. This must be detrimental to the health of the Church, as it is thus deprived of the rich and varied nourishment provided for it. Who has any right to deny that there are texts, hitherto latent in Scripture, which, when fully understood and realized, shall be sufficiently powerful to heal many divisions in the church? Scripture itself encourages us to believe this, as there are many things that are not perfectly understood, and many things that are prophetic are temporarily concealed from our view.

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS ON WHICH TO PREACH.

This, as well as the choice of texts, necessarily belongs to homiletics. This is plain, if homiletics, as we have defined it, is the application of rhetorical principles to the construction of religious discourse connected with a Scripture text. Hence to exclude from our homiletical study Scripture texts and religious subjects, would be to exclude homiletics altogether. On the other hand, to treat only

of texts and subjects, as many do, would be to ignore rhetoric.

What is aimed at now, however, is not to discuss subjects, but to ascertain what subjects should be discussed.

The choice of subjects differs from the choice of texts in this, that in choosing texts our attention is directed to the Word of God, while in choosing subjects we must have regard to the spiritual wants of our hearers, to our own feelings and resources at the time and to the special occasions on which we are called to preach. It is evident that while texts are innumerable, subjects are comparatively few. Hence, there is danger that we may unconsciously have very little variety in our subjects, while there may be great variety in our texts, which is not true variety at all.

1st. We should give *special prominence* to the *great doctrines of grace,* such as the character of God, especially as it is revealed in the person, offices and character of Christ; the person and work of the Holy Spirit; our own guilty, sinful, miserable and helpless state; and the spiritual nature of salvation. These are the grandest, most interesting and powerful of all doctrines. With them the preacher's mind should be so thoroughly imbued as to give tone and complexion to his preaching, whatever his subject may be.

Regarding these subjects to which special prominence should be given, we can easily see how inadequately they are preached upon. How little

preaching do we hear on the character and distinctive works of the persons of the ever-blessed Trinity! Paul, when referring to Christ said: "Whom we preach, warning and teaching everyone that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." He also said, "We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ, the Lord." "Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them." The glorious person and character of the Lord Jesus are seldom preached. How seldom we hear sermons on the guiltiness, sinfulness and helplessness of mankind! The things preached mainly relate to man and to his interests. Even when salvation is discussed, its spiritual nature and the enjoyment of God's favor, and the possession of true holiness, are seldom discussed as they should be. Judging from the nature of preaching relished in many places it would seem as if congregations were largely composed of persons like the Athenians who came only to hear the latest news. They acquire "itching ears." An itinerant has only to raise his standard and draw them out of regularly constituted churches.

It is idle to say that the people are familiar with the great doctrines. We are not to assume that these doctrines are perfectly understood and realized by our hearers. The unconverted do not realize them at all, and the pious only imperfectly. But all these doctrines need not be included in every sermon. To do this in a rhetorical manner would be impossible. It would also be unscrip-

tural, i. e., not according to Scripture usage. It would also overlook the adaptation of discourse to various characters and circumstances. Moreover, it is not needed. You can, by Divine grace, lead sinners to repentance, without always preaching repentance. Repentance is promoted by revealing the spirituality of the law and the claims of God. Faith is produced by preaching Christ. The weakness of the church is due to want of adequate nourishment. Inspired Scripture provides all that is needed that the man of God may be perfect.

It is a mistake to suppose that a full statement of the way of salvation and an exhortation to exercise faith in Christ should be found in every sermon. This would neglect entirely the interests of true Christians who need to be built up in knowledge, faith and holiness. Besides, this assumes that faith in Christ can be produced only by exhorting persons to believe. This is not rhetorical, as it leaves out both understanding and sensibility. If you produce true conviction of sin this will lead to Christ. If you reveal the character of God, especially his justice and mercy, this will lead to Christ. If you reveal the wonderful love of Christ and His sacrifice; if you present the blessed character of the Holy Spirit and His work in applying the remedy; if you show the blessedness which is connected with holiness, the discussion of these subjects will deepen real affection and establish in holiness those who believe.

Our Lord was content to convince the young man who came to Him that he lacked one thing. He was satisfied to rebuke the Pharisee. If any one of these things is aimed at in one sermon it will be enough. If you present an aspect of one of these topics and produce an impression, you may be satisfied. Thus you will have endless variety. These subjects are not so much preached as they should be. The Church suffers on this account. The want of deep conviction, steadfastness and solid attainment is due to this defect. Preaching should be as full, rich and varied as the Bible itself.

2nd. *It is not wise to preach purely doctrinal sermons,* i. e., sermons designed to explain, prove and defend a doctrine, and nothing more. The objection is not to preaching the doctrines of grace, but to preaching them in a didactic manner. I have heard ministers complain that people would not listen to them preaching Christian doctrine; they considered this an evidence of aversion to the great doctrines of grace. In point of fact, what people are averse to is not the doctrines but the didactic manner of preaching them. There is no rhetorical element in this; it is merely teaching. It is not thus the Bible sets forth doctrines, e. g., Justification is never defined nor analyzed in the Bible. But it is presented in connection with spiritual life and holiness, or with the enjoyment of peace with God, or with the hope of eternal life. One practical aspect of a doctrine is sufficient for

a discourse. A series of texts representing various aspects of it may be found and discussed. The more special a subject is the more will you find to say on it. To discuss a subject doctrinally, and seek to give effect to the discussion by an earnest, practical application, will generally prove a failure, as an effective discourse must have practical direction or movement from beginning to end.

There is no difficulty in preaching doctrines if you present them in practical aspects. Supposing that you wish to set forth the evil nature of self-righteousness, you might take the Lord's statement, "Ye all know to justify yourselves before men, but the Lord knoweth the heart." You might take the case of the young nobleman who wished to know what he lacked; or you might take the experience of the Apostle Paul in Philippians III or Romans VII. Many preach precepts and even religious experience in a didactic manner. Every subject loses its emotional and practical nature in their hands. Every landscape in their view becomes a prairie, without light or shade. Even Isocrates himself could not make such persons eloquent.

It is complained that doctrinal preaching is not now relished as it was formerly; and this is considered an evidence of degeneracy. But it should not be assumed without proof that purely doctrinal preaching was ever relished. It was an old dictum, "We should preach doctrines practically, and practice doctrinally." We cannot complain if people are satisfied with the concrete manner in which

truth is presented in the Bible. Moreover, it is essential that discourse be, as far as possible, adapted to the character and taste of our hearers. If this be neglected we shall not only fail to edify them, but we shall also do injustice to our principles, and create a prejudice against them.

Trusting to a practical application at the end is not satisfactory. You will sometimes find a preacher spending thirty minutes explaining a passage of Scripture, and then getting up a display of great earnestness at the end. Such earnestness is unnatural. There is nothing in the discourse to warrant the manifestation of feeling. The preacher is in a frenzy while the people are not moved, and hence not in sympathy with the violent manifestation of earnestness for which there seems no reason. Even Cicero shows the folly of this.

3rd. *Subjects of an experimental nature should be frequently chosen.* They give a pleasing variety to preaching. They seem to have been chosen by the Prophets in the Apostolic age, I Cor., XIV:22-25. Such subjects require much reflection, and also a knowledge of the heart and of religious affections and a good deal of imagination. Religion has much to do with the affections; with feelings toward the Lord, our fellow Christians and all mankind. II Peter, I:7. There is a great deal of cant that is called religious experience. It is superficial, and to men who feel deeply it is disgusting. The very phraseology that belongs to it is offensive. If such subjects are not adequately discussed there is reason

to fear that people will be misled by an unnatural, exaggerated, or spurious religious experience which prevails among certain classes and in much religious literature.

The grand test of religious experience is that of inspired men, and especially the doctrines of the Gospel, which present an accurate counterpart to it. A correct tone of religious feeling is not only valuable in itself, but it is also conservative of sound doctrine. Believers in sound doctrine will not accept what is unsound at the outset. But if an excitement and a peculiar tone of feeling are produced, doctrines corresponding to such feeling will be eagerly embraced. When religious belief is changed by this process, people are not aware of it, and they cannot be convinced of it. It is much easier to refute doctrinal error than to correct spurious religious feeling. Religious experience should not be left to ignorant persons, nor should it be treated in a slovenly, careless or commonplace manner; but the art of preaching it should be cultivated by earnest reflection, and by careful study of the religious affections. Such studies will enrich all your other sermons, and also qualify you to act as spiritual advisers.

The Bible is full of history, biography and religious experience. It has to deal with the whole mind, hence, it cannot be adequately revealed in doctrine; it requires also a subjective presentation. And to make this known to the world, the pious and benevolent conduct of Christians is relied on. Many

are convinced of the truth by sentiments and conduct, who are prejudiced against its doctrines. Acts II:42-47. The truth in religion can be presented subjectively as well as doctrinally. But it is not necessary to keep the two aspects distinctly apart. It is well to let the doctrinal presentation of religion, in the course of preaching, merge into the subjective. This brings it near the heart and adds persuasion—it is truly rhetorical. Christians expect such preaching, and if you do not favor them with it, some will seek it elsewhere. There is a kind of slovenly way of talking on such subjects. No proper preparation is made. Subjects of this nature are often exaggerated, besides, they are fanciful and incorrect.

Many, for example, attach supreme importance to the mere excitation of feeling in connection with preaching. Such would do well to study the parable of the sower in Matt. XIII. They should consider the nature of the feeling, the sources of their joys and sorrows.

It is not safe to trust to one's experiences as something acceptable to God, and as evidences of his favor. This is to seek to maintain a religious life based on experience. Many look for comfort to their own spiritual states, not to Christ and His holy Word.

Many attach importance to passages of Scripture suggested to them. This is well, if they consider the passages the main thing, and the edifying

thing, not the manner of the suggestion, by which they are apt to delude themselves.

They attach importance to vivid pictures of Christ and heavenly things made in the imagination, as if they were favored with some special revelation. An old divine said, "When this tendency gains the ascendency persons convey their imaginations into chambers of imagery, where they sport with their own delusions."

There are many that contend that the process of true conversion is precisely the same in all cases. Some contend for what is called a law work in every case, others for prostrations and paroxysms, others for ecstasies. There is no doubt great variety and wisdom in the work of the Holy Spirit in applying the remedy. He can convert by producing deep conviction of sin, and He can convert by the sweet constraint of the love of Christ.

There is often a fictitious standard of conversion set up. This leaves no room for variety; it takes no account of the growth of true religion in the soul, nor of the diversity of the Spirit's operations. In these circumstances we must have some standard to guide us. It may be asked, how can we preach on a subject so uncertain, in reference to which there are great diversities of views among pious persons?

The answer is that the only infallible guide is furnished by the experience of pious persons which is recorded in the Word of God, and also in the fact that religious experience must present a coun-

terpart to Christian doctrine. Religious affections are reasonable; it is easy to account for them; and it is as easy to see that it is through the instrumentality of saving truth alone they can be produced. Preach Scripture experience and you will be safe. The Bible is full of it and of biography and religious sentiment. This should make preaching most attractive. Such preaching, as it exactly corresponds to sound doctrine, is conservative of it.

As to repentance, we may see it in the case of David and in the case of Paul. In both cases there are clear views of the spirituality of the law of God revealing sinfulness of the heart, and clear views of redeeming mercy. As to assurance of personal interest in the saving mercy of God, we can see it in Romans V:1-2. This passage refers to all Christians. Assurance flows from justification by faith, religious experience and the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not an essential part of faith, but it is a fruit of it. In our standards it is said to flow from justification, etc. So with the hope of Heaven at death. II Cor. V.

It is a matter of much importance to have a healthy tone of religious experience prevail in the church. If this does not exist, something spurious will gain admission. When spurious religious experience finds its way into the church, it is almost impossible to get it under control. It is much easier to deal with unsound doctrine than with spurious religious experience. If you acquire skill in this department of your preaching, you will be able to en-

rich all your other sermons by a proportionate admission of this into them. You will acquire such skill as to qualify you for being competent and trusted spiritual advisers—a very rare accomplishment at the present day.

4th. *Purely moral sermons should not be preached.* A person does not care to have duties coldly presented to him; he wishes to have them connected with religious principle, that he may feel the obligation to discharge them resting upon him. Such sermons being unevangelical and inadequate are lacking in both interest and power. The word "practical" is frequently used to denote sermons which merely set forth duty. But practical, in its truest sense, all preaching, and, indeed, all rhetorical discourse, must be. A sermon must be practical which increases our knowledge of God to whom we are accountable, or which enables us to feel more deeply the force of truth, or which produces or intensifies religious affection, or whose tendency is to make the outwardly good, moral character, holy.

5th. *Special occasions will suggest valuable subjects.* But such occasions should not be multiplied. Funeral sermons are not desirable. The minister is placed at a great disadvantage, being expected to make a great effort without sufficient time to prepare for it. Better far, take an old sermon, being careful not to state that it is an old sermon, nor to apologize for it. There is risk of either offending the friends of the deceased or of compromising the truth. The subject of the sermon

should be some impressive or consolatory doctrine, not the character of the deceased. If he was a truly pious man the fact may be incidentally noticed and improved. If he was not, it is surely wrong to speak of his excellent social qualities, and then say, we must leave him to the mercy of God. The advantages of funeral sermons are that they are spoken to a seriously impressed audience and in the hearing of many who do not attend church.

6th. *Controversial sermons*, or even sermons which have a controversial tone, *are in general not edifying*. While the right to defend truth and to refute error is fully recognized and maintained, yet the difficulty is to determine when controversial sermons should be preached. It is quite possible that a minister may have to engage in controversy to maintain the cause of truth. But such cases are very rare; they should not be sought for. There are, however, many subjects for the sake of which we should not engage in controversy, e. g., those of a purely political or municipal nature. Our influence in all such cases should be indirect. Able and faithful preaching of the Gospel and of the laws of truth will qualify the people to use the franchise wisely and justly. In a constitutional and representative government, like ours, the people should naturally elect men who will represent their Christian views and feelings. If we can elevate the tone of religious character, this will reveal itself in our representatives and in the laws

they enact. In this way religious sentiment will obtain an ascendency over selfish secular interests.

Besides, our people are so divided into political parties that if we take either side, we shall be sure to impair our influence for good and to make enemies. A minister who acts as a political partisan will not likely be able to retain his charge.

There is danger, on the other hand, that a minister may be deprived of his civil rights. In addition to this, a minister is often almost compelled to preach political sermons. He is told that it is his duty to do so. This he may moderately but firmly deny. He need not manifest temper. In due time, when the fierce political contest has passed over, his conduct will be approved by right-minded people. He may find it prudent not to vote for either party. Even Paul declared that all things were lawful to him, but not expedient.

As to religious controversy, it is not wise to refute errors which are speculative and which do not prevail among our people. We are entitled to assume that people who attend our ministry are not attached to error condemned in our standards, unless they seek to propagate it. Besides, there are vain persons who court notoriety, and, when their views are referred to in public, feel flattered. Others are enraged; but probably neither are benefited; and meanwhile the church's edification, which is the main thing, is neglected.

Were we to succeed in removing all speculative error from a hearer's mind, he would still need to

be converted to God. Now, a man by divine grace may be as easily brought from skepticism to the exercise of saving faith as to the exercise of merely historical faith. It is a poor thing to be satisfied with wounding or silencing an opponent. The victory thus gained is one which Christ will not recognize nor accept; His desire is to convert an enemy into a friend. It is a mistake to suppose that speculative error must be removed from a man's mind that saving truth may be admitted. Such a process is not needed. The truth presented is generally sufficient by divine grace, to expel the error. A man of great ability may gain a victory over one who holds error, while the latter is as far removed from the faith as ever. The error may be lodged in the heart.

It is said that when the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, the stoic philosopher, heard that a commander of his army in Syria had rebelled against him and, when his treason was detected, had committed suicide, said that he greatly regretted that the officer had committed suicide, "for," said he, "he has deprived me of an opportunity of converting an enemy into a friend." The Lord Jesus, referring to the conversion of Paul, said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake."

There is danger of so refuting an error as to give it much publicity. Not many years ago a Presbyterian minister, a truly good man, well known to me, considered it his duty to warn his people earnestly from the pulpit against reading a popular novel,

which had just come out. His labor was in vain, however, as his people besieged the bookstores early next morning to procure the book. So great was their zeal that the supply was soon exhausted, and a telegram had to be sent off to procure what was necessary to gratify the interest which his sermon had awakened. But, how did he know so much about the book?

There is also danger attending over-refutation of error. Hearers are apt to suppose that it has great power and vitality when so much refutation is needed. Thus a reaction is likely to be produced in favor of the error. Apologetic preaching tends to shake the faith of an audience. I knew a Presbyterian minister who was afraid of what he considered an epidemic of Socinianism. Hence, he preached a series of sermons in opposition to it, the sermons extending over a considerable length of time. At the close of this special effort, six influential families left the congregation and joined the Socinians. The truth would have fared better had he preached with equal earnestness on the glory of the Redeemer's person, character and redemptive work, not overlooking the words of grace that fell from His lips, and the miracles that he wrought to save life or relieve suffering. When a great many arguments are used, a considerable number must be weak, and these enfeeble the whole body of proof.

Besides, if you wish to refute a man's error with a view to his conversion, it is a mistake to attack

it violently and to show its absurdity and wickedness, as this makes it more difficult to renounce it. Rather address your discourse to anything even apparently good in his views; and this will disarm prejudice and enable him to yield without unnecessary humiliation.

As to what are called errors in science, young ministers can easily see that the refutation of these should be left to professional scientists, who are specialists and who are competent to deal with them effectually. I do not say that young ministers should not study these matters and master them, if they can, but simply that they should not attack giants with weapons that they are not able to use. If David had gone in Saul's heavy armor to attack Goliath, he would probably not have slain the giant who defied the hosts of the Lord.

It is a pity when ministers form the habit of complaining of skepticism, and that, too, in a feeble and helpless kind of way, as if the foundations of our faith were being undermined. Let them rather preach the truth adequately and powerfully and, by the grace of God, they will be enabled to expel error. Let them speak as men who are assured of the truth and who have felt the power of it in their own hearts, and their words will have the accent of conviction. Young ministers should not involve themselves nor the church inopportunely in controversy. They have generally neither the resources nor the prudence needed; and they should know that an unskilful advocate damages a cause. The question is

a difficult one. This, even Solomon admitted; for he tells us not to answer a fool according to his folly, and also to answer him thus. Christian prudence should be used, and divine protection should be sought. *Magna est veritas et praevalebit.*

The greatest difficulty is in dealing with latent error, or error skilfully combined with truth. The truth that is incorporated with the error imparts vitality to it. It is a great matter at the outset to ascertain the "status questionis." This, in the heat of controversy, can seldom be done. Contending parties do not understand one another. Hence the point of view is not clearly perceived.

This can be easily illustrated. e. g. There are contentions in reference to divine decrees or purposes. Many oppose statements of these purposes, not because they suppose that God, infinitely wise, acts without a purpose; but because they think that divine purposes are incompatible with the accountability of moral agents. Hence, their hostility is really excited by the supposed destruction of moral accountability, not by the divine purposes. A great point would be gained at the outset were these persons assured that their opponents admit as fully as they do, human accountability, which is not only taught in the Bible, but is a matter of distinct consciousness to every saved person. The real point at issue is the supposed incompatibility of divine decrees with human accountability.

So with the perseverance of the saints. It is not meant that all who profess faith in Christ will

persevere to the end; or that true believers in Christ will certainly persevere in their own strength; or that the Christian life can be successfully maintained without conscious and strenuous effort.

Some are opposed to justification by the imputation of Christ's righteousness because that they believe that this must lead to antinomianism, hence all their just opposition to the latter is directed against imputation. Others are opposed to preaching justification by faith alone, because they do not understand the nature of the faith referred to. If truth could be freed from all alloy, the very statement of it would be sufficient proof of it. Were latent error detected and clearly presented, it would refute itself.

English deists of the last century declared that religion learned from the light of nature is so full and satisfactory that there is no need of a divine revelation at all. Hence, evangelicals could not endure the words "natural religion." Toplady, the antagonist of Wesley's Arminianism, exclaimed, "Natural religion, natural nonsense." Yet the Bible is full of references to what nature, i. e., God's works and the light of nature in the mind, teach in reference to His glorious perfections. See Acts XIV: 15-18; Acts XVII: 22-31; Acts IV: 23, 24.

So with preaching the law of God. Nearly all the heresies that have troubled the Church have some elements of truth in them to which they are indebted for any vitality which they possessed. It is, therefore, a matter of supreme importance to

detach the error from the truth; unless this is done the error cannot be effectually dislodged.

It is easy to see the difficulty and danger connected with preaching controversial sermons; and the qualifications for this work; and the method of procedure.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS IN REFERENCE TO FINDING SUBJECTS AND TEXTS.

Hitherto I have spoken of finding texts and finding subjects, at present I offer merely general remarks in reference to finding subjects and texts conjointly. We have seen that texts are numerous while subjects are comparatively few. Hence, a minister may preach on one subject while preaching on fifty texts. This is often done and a minister instead of advancing may travel around a comparatively small circle, while he is not fully conscious of it. It is not enough to indicate how a few texts and subjects may be found. It is necessary, also, if it can be done, to indicate texts and subjects which may be required during a long ministry, and that, too, in one congregation.

It is useful to form a little system of subjects, such as the Christian graces; or Christian ethics, as in Eph. IV: 25-32; or the biographies of eminent men as in Heb. XI. It might be well to take a system of Christian doctrine as in the Shorter Catechism. I mention the Shorter Catechism merely as a convenient guide. I suggest that you be-

gin at the application of the remedy. You might subsequently begin at the beginning. I would use its questions merely as landmarks, not discussing finally the questions at all. It might be followed in connection with systematic reading. But this plan should not be disclosed to the congregation, nor should it have the rigidity and formality of a doctrinal system. This might furnish one subject a week for two years; i. e., supposing that miscellaneous subjects should be freely interspersed. This might be demanded by the special study required for some of the consecutive subjects, by pressing ministerial engagements, and by special services. I do not advise you to preach systematic theology nor even biblical theology, but to discuss the doctrines rhetorically as they are presented in the Bible. At the end of two years the whole series might be restudied, rewritten, corrected and embellished. Blanks might be filled up and redundancies cut off, and the whole might be enriched by your increasing knowledge and experience, making it cover the second time three years. At the end of this period repeat the process. But the work would become lighter at every repetition of the process, as less change would be required; in many cases, none at all.

It might be said that the congregation would not like this system of preaching. But how could they discover it? It is said that the texts would reveal it. Then, by all means, change the texts. We have shown that you have a large and inexhaustible sup-

ply of texts at your command. Eminent preachers, some time ago, were wont to prefix or append to a carefully prepared sermon a list of texts on any one of which it might be preached, with perhaps a slight change in the introduction. This, however, should be practised with due caution, lest it should make the preacher slothful. Still it would be amply justified in connection with the system now proposed. People do not notice if a text is preached on once in three or four years. Why people should be afraid of hearing texts preached on several times, while they do not complain although they hear virtually the same subject discussed almost every Sabbath, I cannot comprehend. This would secure far greater variety, and conduce more to the edification of both pastor and people than the usual way of choosing subjects and texts. Many think that there is great variety in their preaching merely because there is great variety in their texts. This is a mistake. To secure real variety it must be found in the subjects. Besides, additional variety might be had in the miscellaneous subjects discussed at one service every Sabbath.

The advantages of the method we have been advocating are manifest.

1. It would secure regular study, which is a great matter, and which, if not begun at the commencement of one's ministry, will probably never be practised.

2. It will secure greater variety than any other

method—much greater than is secured by preaching on miscellaneous subjects and texts.

3. It would furnish ample, spiritual nourishment for the people. Nothing profitable will be kept back from them, as Paul said to the elders of Ephesus, Acts XX:20.

In addition to this, in order to secure still greater variety and edification, one might deliver consecutive discourses on a gospel or an epistle. How this should be done will be explained in due time.

The keeping of a book, in which, texts which casually strike you may be recorded, is recommended. Many have tried it and found it to be of little use in an emergency. This has several times been my own experience. The reason is that persons recording such texts have failed to record, or even find in the texts, suitable subjects. We have already seen that a text is not truly found unless a subject has been discovered in it. If a person were to note down, not only a text but a subject invented out of it, and the lively impression it produced on his mind at the time, it would be of very great value and occasion no disappointment. But another difficulty occurs here; he could hardly be restrained from preaching on such a text at once. It would be too good to keep.

It should be known that reading the Scriptures in the original suggests many interesting subjects that we never previously noticed. Like the man who found treasure hid in a field, we would be glad at any cost to get possession of it. Besides, we

would feel an interest and power in it which we never felt before. Reading a chapter in the original every morning would bring a sure reward.

Another important thing remains to be noticed, which is the overhauling of old miscellaneous sermons. There may be some of remarkable interest and power, which should not be laid on the shelf, but which should be restudied and rewritten when one is in a suitable spiritual state. Without careful examination you may not know that you have some sermons of so great merit and value. Of their very best productions preachers are often entirely unconscious. This is a matter worthy of special attention. There is a very great difference in the value of the same minister's sermons. This, too, is due not merely to diligent study, but to inspiration at the time they were compiled. Such sermons, although miscellaneous, will in due time be worthy of a place among the systematic discourses already referred to.

I would state another method by which your subjects and texts might be greatly increased—in some cases doubled. This could be done by preaching your old sermons and texts extempore. I suppose that, in general, Presbyterian ministers study their sermons carefully and write them out fully, and deliver them with a mere sketch of outlines and salient points to aid the memory. What I propose is that, as you are well acquainted with your subject and text, and what you hope to obtain by the discussion, you might preach the same sermon

extempore, i. e., preach it as if it had never been written at all. This would give great fulness and variety to your preaching, and great interest and power. This will be more fully discussed when we have our attention specially directed to extempore preaching.

THE UNITY AND INVENTION OF THE SUBJECT

CHAPTER VI

THE UNITY AND INVENTION OF THE SUBJECT

This belongs to systematic rhetoric. What has been insisted on for some time in relation to subjects and texts belongs exclusively to preaching the Word, i. e., to homiletics. Not so with what must now engage our attention.

Unity is essential in any work of art. The unity and invention are the most important points to which our attention can be directed in the first part of our system. These are things of supreme importance in any discourse, whether sacred or secular. An edifying and impressive discourse cannot be constructed on several subjects. The very life of a discourse is in its unity. If there is not unity the discourse will be incoherent. There will be no consecutive thought, no decided impression. If a subject has not unity it cannot be properly discussed. There can be no proper division or analysis, no organic structure, no life, no symmetrical development and no practical end gained.

Unity requires that there be one leading idea to which everything is subordinated. Unity is not unicity, but it is the result of union, the union of parts in one whole. It is not absolute and simple,

but relative and complex, a unity of different parts, the relation of which to each other and to the whole, can be perceived at one view. e. g. "The rest that Christ gives" has unity, although it comprises all the elements of this rest. "The blessedness of the saints in Heaven" has unity, although it comprises seeing God, enjoying God as their portion and doing His will. This analysis is psychological. The proposition, "Christ gives His people rest," has unity. By directing all your arguments to prove this, you secure unity, no matter how numerous the arguments may be, provided they are coordinate or lie in the same field of view.

Intelligent and serious hearers demand unity. Each hearer of this class, unconsciously to himself, will endeavor to give unity to a discourse to which the preacher has not given it; or will attach himself to one of the preacher's ideas; or will perhaps force all these ideas to take the direction which pleases his own mind. Thus the preacher, who for want of diligence or skill, fails to impart unity to his subject, imposes too great labor on his audience, and defeats his own purpose.

Archbishop Whately speaks of "many a wandering discourse one hears in which a preacher aims at nothing and hits it." He adds, "Some speakers resemble an exploring party on a newly discovered island; they start in any direction without aim or object."

Bautain, a much more eloquent man, says, "Each discourse must have its own unity, and constitute

a whole, in order that the hearer may embrace in his understanding what is said to him, and be able to produce it at need." He adds: "A discourse without a parent idea is a stream without a fountain, a plant without a root, a body without a soul, empty sounds which beat the air, or a tinkling cymbal. The hearer does not cling to a speaker who, undertaking to guide him, seems ignorant whither he is going." Paley's advice was: "to prepare one point in each discourse and stick to it; inasmuch as the hearer never carries away more than one impression."

To secure unity three simple rules may be helpful:

1st. Reduce your subject to the form of a proposition, stated in the fewest, simplest and most forcible words. The doctrinal proposition is easily transformed into a practical one. In this concentrated form, any incongruous element may be readily detected. But this test is not infallible, as you may preach on one word and not have unity. If you take e. g., "sanctification" you may preach on its meaning, on the means by which it may be effected, on its relation to justification, or on the blessedness for which it qualifies the soul—four subjects.

2nd. Have a definite object in view, a definite impression to be produced. If a man directs everything towards a definite end which he earnestly desires, he will be kept from wandering or loitering, or plucking flowers by the way. A rhetorical subject is more definite than a logical one. e. g. "The Bible is inspired" is logical. "I purpose to

explain the nature of inspiration" or "I purpose to prove that the Bible is inspired" is rhetorical. A theme which has no relation to a subject practically important, or which cannot be made so without painful effort, is not a proper basis for a rhetorical discourse. Rhetorical unity is different from didactic in this, that all the elements it combines have for their last term a practical application or conclusion. A man whose head cannot guide him may be impelled aright by his heart. This is the secret of the effective speaking of illiterate persons. Their inward impulses inspire and direct them.

3rd. Have one principle on which analysis or division is made in explanation of the subject; and one principle on which arguments are invented or arranged in confirmation of the same. If this cannot be done it is because the subject lacks unity. The adoption of one principle will guide aright. It will prevent cross-divisions, which create confusion. e. g. If you choose to divide mankind, you may take any attribute in rational animal, or you may divide men according to the color of their skin; but you must not mix up a geographical or an ethnological principle with this. Whately remarks that when it is difficult to divide or discuss a subject, it will generally be found that another principle has crept in.

Notice that (a) Unity is not confined to the subject, but must pervade the whole sermon. The various parts reached by division or analysis must not

be discussed independently, like little essays on a level, but with direct reference to the aim of the sermon, and with manifest reference to the whole of which each is a consecutive part, and with reference to its relation to the other parts. This is the only way in which unity in a discourse can be secured, and a decided impression produced. It is pleasant to compose, remember and deliver a discourse having such unity; and it is delightful to hear and attend to it, and be impressed and persuaded by it. Many preachers, failing to perceive this, ruin the best of methods by adopting the essay style. They seem to have a persistent tendency to descend to the level of mere teaching. Continuity of thought and interest cannot be secured in this way.

(b) Strict unity must be maintained even in sermons on extended passages. One leading idea must be seized and all else subordinated to it. This subordination implies no depreciation, as it is not ethical, but rhetorical. The laws of co-ordination and subordination must be observed in the interest of unity. They will guide you even when unity does not exist, as in duty and motives. To have strict unity you must determine whether you wish mainly to explain a duty, or to enforce it, and allow the main idea to be conspicuous and to lead. For example, in "thou shalt not bear false witness" you would naturally make the explanation

of the duty prominent, as it is not generally understood, the motives being subordinated to this. Such sermons were, in Scotland, called lectures, a term used in England to designate discourses on special occasions. I do not wish to indicate at present how such discourses should be constructed, but merely to state that so far as unity is concerned there must be no exceptions in their favor.

I am aware that many will object to what I now state, on the ground that the Scriptures will not be explained to the people, to their great loss. But will it not make explanation more interesting and edifying when the text is explained in such a way as to present the practical aim of the writer, instead of confining attention to words and phrases? It may, indeed, be profitable sometimes to explain very important words that make clear the point you wish to discuss; but this can be no apology for explaining everything.

The principle now inculcated will guide one when preaching on a duty and enforcing it by motives. Of course, you cannot properly enforce a duty without first explaining it, but you may give greater prominence to one than to the other. Unity may be helped by so explaining a duty as to facilitate an orderly statement of motives, allowing the same tone of feeling to pervade both parts.

(c) When a subject may be viewed in different aspects, your purpose in preaching must decide

to which the greatest prominence should be given. When the text contains several ideas of great value, which you cannot fuse together, several may be waived. This should be done in a most respectful manner. The old divines were wont to maintain that this should never be done. This is different from giving a matter difficult to incorporate a merely subordinate place; it excludes it altogether. There is nothing disrespectful to the text in this, provided that the whole meaning of it is briefly stated, and also the reason for discussing only a part of it at the present. Were this not to be permitted, a subject of a more general nature would be required and one less fitted to produce an impression.

Cicero attached much importance to having a definite subject and purpose. He said: "When after hearing and understanding a cause, I proceed to examine the subject-matter of it, I settle nothing until I have ascertained to what point my whole speech, bearing immediately on the question of the case, should be directed." The opinion of Cicero here given is worthy of serious attention. He saw the importance of mastering the whole cause entrusted to him, so that he should see the status questionis, and also the main point at issue to which his pleading was to be directed. This reminds me that a judge of the supreme court said to me that he did not complain of the want of

knowledge of Scripture, nor of the theology of our ministers, but he did complain that they did not see the need of having some definite purpose in every sermon, in seeking to gain which they should use all their resources, ability and energy.

THE INVENTION OF THE SUBJECT

After discussing the unity of the subject we are prepared to consider the invention of it. We could not properly do this before understanding the matter of the subject, the most important thing in which is its unity.

Lange's statement in reference to the invention of the subject is good, and is also specific. It is to be found in his introduction to the commentary on Matthew and is as follows: "Standing between the Word of God and the special wants of the congregation, the minister must choose his theme according to his spiritual perception at the time, and his peculiar disposition. However obvious in the circumstances a text may appear, yet the subject itself, the theme, is always a discovery, or rather a gift of the Lord, a message to the Church." It shows how much depends on the preacher's state of mind at the time, which affects his view of spiritual truth. When clear spiritual vision is possessed, the mind can see a depth of meaning, a glory and a beauty in spiritual things that it cannot see at other times. Remember Luther's words: "Bene precasse est bene studuisse."

There are also affecting views of the spiritual

wants of the people that produce sympathy with them, and a sincere and earnest desire to benefit them. This is entirely different from seeking to please or amuse. This feeling in its most tender form was always present in our Lord's mind. To His view the people were like sheep without a shepherd.

There is also a looking up to God for direction and help, and for a subject which shall be a divine gift, a message to the Church. This is attested by experience. If you take an old sermon that complies with these conditions, it will be new and fresh to yourself and to the people. If you take a new sermon that does not comply with these conditions, although the ink on it is scarcely dry, it will fall powerless at your feet. There is inspiration in the one case, none in the other.

The conditions favorable to invention are worthy of serious study. If these are wanting, invention, properly speaking, is out of the question. Cicero insisted that an orator must be a man of learning and universal information, and although his knowledge of many subjects must be superficial, yet he must thoroughly understand Ethics, Law and Politics.

(a) Adequate knowledge of theology, especially Biblical, is indispensable. If Cicero, for the sake of personal aggrandizement, thoroughly mastered ethics, law and politics, it is a shame when ministers of the Gospel shrink from those Biblical studies that furnish the matter of discourse. Cras-

sus, as Cicero relates, said that the eloquence of his contemporaries was due entirely to their learning and ability, not to their rhetorical skill. But Antonius maintained that very much was due to rhetorical culture and to conforming to the principles of rhetoric; and that speeches not so conformed, notwithstanding learning and ability, would have been much better had they been more rhetorical. If such studies are valuable to men of the greatest learning and ability, how much more must they be to men of inferior learning and gifts.

It is quite evident that a person must have some matter to work upon, and out of which he may invent and enrich his subject. If he has not such he can no more make an edifying sermon than an architect can erect a house without material. If it is not in his own mind, he must seek it; and until it is found invention is out of the question.

Rhetoric cannot reasonably be expected to furnish the matter of discourse, but it can show the necessity of invention, teach how to construct subjects, and how to make them interesting, impressive and persuasive. In addition to professional studies an orator must be a man of learning and universal education. Cicero states this qualification merely in the interest of eloquence, which is as much required in the pulpit as in Parliament, or at the Bar, and this, too, not for display or popularity, but for effective persuasive discourse.

(b) Another condition is a knowledge of the character and sentiments of your hearers, espe-

cially of your own people. The preacher is said "to stand between the Word of God and the special wants of the congregation." How can he do this if he does not know these special wants? Without this knowledge he cannot invent a subject suited to them at all. It is only thus he can discover what subjects are fitted to do his hearers good—by being in harmony with their habits of thought, and their particular feelings at the time. Christian sympathy will stimulate the inventive faculty to strenuous and sustained effort. Learned men often lack the sympathy with the people which is needed to guide them in inventing subjects. Such men should not be engaged in preaching the Gospel. It is absurd to say that a man is too well-educated to preach to the illiterate. If his education is of the right kind it will enable him to make his subject easily understood and easily digested. When a so-called learned man despises his hearers he is not fit to be their teacher. Such were the Pharisees who said, "this people that know not the law is cursed." If a minister is so fascinated by ancient literature as to live in the past, he should not presume to influence men now living and struggling under the stress and strain of modern life. You never find lawyers or statesmen despising their hearers. Of one who has left immeasurably behind Him all the religious teachers who have ever lived, it is said that "the common people heard Him gladly." He said, as a proof that He was the Messiah, "the

poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

(c) A mind enjoying, or sincerely seeking, the guidance of the Holy Spirit. When a man's mind is in a right spiritual state, when he looks up to God for direction and help, he will be enabled to discover subjects that are precious and affecting. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. A mind in such a state readily attaches itself to spiritual truths that will be sure to find a response in the hearts of others.

It is easy to see that these general conditions favorable to invention are in the mind of the speaker himself. These are things that the preacher should permanently possess. They should indicate his state of mind at all times, if his inner life is at all what it should be, if he is to feel habitually that he stands between the Word of God and the special wants of the congregation,—a position implying very great responsibility and anxiety.

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS OF INVENTION.

(a) An accurate knowledge of your text. It is only thus you can discover its specific meaning. If your attention is concentrated for a considerable time on your text, and that, too, in the original language, and with the aid of such help as you can obtain from such critical and exegetical books as you possess, you will probably be rewarded by discovering a valuable subject. If you do not find it at once, exercise patience. If it does not lie

on the surface of the text, dig therein as if you were seeking hidden treasure. Such labor will not be in vain. It is clear that the inventive faculty must have material to work upon.

(b) The impression on the mind of a principle contained in a text. This impression is so strong sometimes that it cannot be effaced. In this case you have not to find the subject, but the subject seems to find you. When this impression is strong, although the subject is not at once perceived, its presence is felt. This is due to a kind of spiritual susceptibility, and is highly favorable to invention. As it is not continuous, but spasmodic, full advantage should be taken of it at the moment, before it is forgotten. It may be of greater value than hours of study. Besides, the impression will suggest the method, and also help the composition and delivery of the discourse.

(c) An earnest desire to edify the Church and to glorify God. Besides, affections of piety and benevolence will elevate and purify the mind and raise it above selfish and vain desires, purify its vision and impart to it composure and courage which are favorable to invention.

THE PROCESS OF INVENTION.

This is not easy to analyze. It includes meditation on the matter out of which the subject is to be invented, *i. e.,* when the subject is found in a text. Many express this by saying that they allow the matter to steep in the mind for a time. This seems

a kind of negative process. But the person inventing a subject must exert himself. He can concentrate his attention on the matter. This is, of course, a double process that requires a conscious effort. There must be, not only concentrated attention, but also effort to resist anything that would distract, and to dismiss everything that is irrelevant.

By persevering attention and contemplation, a subject may be expected in due time to appear. When you get the first glimpse of it, increase your efforts. A suitable discovery will surely be your reward. Sir Isaac Newton considered that the faculty of close and persevering attention is genius itself, or is the way in which genius is sure to manifest itself. He considered the strength of this faculty the measure of a man's ability. An exercise of will may direct attention to a specific point, and then interest in the matter will retain the attention. All who have become eminent in literature, science or art, have been distinguished by excessive persevering study and concentration of all their powers of mind. There is a kind of habitual preparation for invention in a thorough and continued study of the flock, of human life, of ourselves and of the Bible; in a habit of disciplining our mind and arranging our ideas which will never leave us at a loss. Cicero says: "In speaking, three things are required in finding arguments, genius, method and diligence. Diligence is to be particularly cultivated by us; it is to be constantly exerted; it is capable of effecting almost anything.

Thus the mind is placed in the best position for exercising its inventive or creative power. When the subject is thus discovered it occupies the whole mind for a time, not only irradiating the understanding but inflaming the heart. Although it is difficult to analyze the process of invention itself, yet it is important to see that the mind has ample material on which to work, and that it be placed in the best position to exert its powers.

Facility in invention may be acquired by the habit of disciplining our minds and arranging our ideas. Thus the mind will not be like a lumber closet, full of confusion and dust, where things are not arranged or placed in their proper positions; but it will be like a spacious and elegant room, which is full of light, and in which all things are arranged in proper order, so that anything that is wanted may be found in a moment, and that, too, with all things relating or belonging to it. The contents of the mind are thus classified. This is very different from a mind into which facts, notions and images are thrown in confusion.

Power of invention is acquired partly by habit, and partly by the cultivation of the mind itself. A knowledge of the laws of thought is of immense value, when the mind is able to conform its processes to them. Indeed, an educated mind is a law to itself. Its process of thinking imparts organic structure and vitality to a subject. Divisions are natural and easy.

It may be said that such laborious invention is

too much to expect of us, it costs too much trouble. But consider the educational value of this, the indefinite improvement and strengthening of the mind itself. How much refined enjoyment does a cultivated mind experience, with how much pleasure do its trained powers work! There is no undue strain, no painful friction, no uncertain result. Is not the preaching of the Gospel revealing the unsearchable wisdom, and the unfathomable love of God worthy of the highest human and angelic powers? When it is committed to the noblest and most highly cultivated minds the treasure is, even then, put into earthern vessels. How splendid will be the achievement when the mind acquires such culture and power as to be able to perform its inventive or creative function without conscious effort.

Some say: "We can get up sermons that will do well enough without understanding this mental process and without principles to guide us." This is generally the case when men with no literary taste enter on a literary profession. It is the case when a man learns an art without understanding the principles on which it is based. Such may, in a manner succeed; but their work will be neither congenial nor pleasant to them.

If a person cannot invent subjects for himself he must be content to borrow, beg or appropriate in some more reprehensible manner the inventions of others. He thus dooms himself to a life of literary poverty; and this is due, not to want of ability,

but, as Cicero says, to the want of diligence. This is, in ministers, not an intellectual, but a moral disability. The only effectual remedy for it, that we know, is moral earnestness, which only divine grace can impart.

Others may say: "We understand in a superficial manner what is meant by invention, but we do not possess this power and we fear that we shall never be able to acquire it." In this case they may avail themselves of what may be called the indirect process of invention. This consists in consulting all available commentaries on the subject aimed at, and meditating on them, the mind selecting and arranging what seems congenial to it. In this way a subject is invented and by meditation made your own. After the subject is partially invented by the indirect process, many are able to complete the invention by the direct process. This is most desirable; persevering study is thus almost equal to genius. If those who adopt this method strive subsequently to elaborate matter thus obtained, so as to place on it the impress of their own minds, this is all that can be reasonably expected at first. If this is persevered in intelligently, a higher attainment may be reached. Indeed, many are able after studying the matter of discourse in the indirect manner, and after acquiring fuller information, and also suggestions in reference to method, to invent by the direct process. Thus a little intelligence and practice may develop and

strengthen operative power. They will find the exercise of creative power most delightful.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBJECTS WHEN INVENTED.

1. Objective: A subject should be very valuable to be the basis or germ of discourse. A person may think that he has found a valuable subject, because it has cost him a great deal of trouble. This labor may blind him to its defects. It ought to be distinctly understood that subjects that are not valuable and have no power, interest or practical influence, are not proper inventions at all. Preachers often do great injustice to themselves by preaching on texts and on subjects which will not yield impressive sermons, unless force is applied to both.

We should preach on great and important themes, a knowledge of which will shed a clear and strong light on the great doctrines of grace. We should preach on subjects which profoundly interest and impress our hearers and produce in them such a thirst for the word of life that they will be led to search the Scriptures for themselves. Thus our Lord preached, planting germs in a suitable soil which sprung up in due time and bore rich fruit. So Paul preached at Beraea that the people were led to search the Scriptures to understand their import and the harmony between them and what Paul taught. Preaching should be suggestive, leading the people to study and think for themselves. It

should also tend to elevate, purify and ennoble the minds of hearers.

I know that many fear that they will run out of matter if they preach mainly on subjects having such a tendency. I knew of a case in which an old minister found fault with a young one, telling him that he was not a thrifty preacher, that he would soon run out of matter. Preposterous! Such themes will strengthen the inventive power of the preacher; and, at the end of a long life, he will be able to say of the Word of God what Sir Isaac Newton said of science: "I have been picking up pebbles on the strand while the ocean of truth lies before me unexplored." This fear is not reasonable. Luther and Calvin were sharers in it. The deeper you sink your shafts in the mine of sacred truth the more precious will be the treasure you will find to make you truly rich and to enrich the church. Let us see then that we have valuable subjects, and let us never think of serving the Lord with what cost us nothing.

Even in texts in which a subject is distinctly stated, there must be laborious thinking that you may discover the full content of the terms and the relation existing between them. Thus there is the labor of invention, whether what you seek lies on the surface of the earth or at the bottom of a well. Mere conceits are not true discoveries; they are the fruits of perverse or misapplied ingenuity.

We present now several very simple texts and

subjects to show that in every one of them the inventive faculty must be exercised.

(a) "By grace ye are saved." Many think that a subject is invented when they say that salvation is gratuitous. But we have here merely two identical propositions. Before you can say that you have found a subject you must determine whether it is to be explained or proved. In such a case the method of explanation or proof must be clear. This involves mental effort and resources. Shall we prove the statement, say, by divine testimony and by human experience? Or, shall we prove it in detail, by proving its various parts to be gratuitous? In this last case I must analyze it, and prove that calling, justification, sanctification and spiritual blessedness, now and hereafter, are gratuitous. Your subject has now an organic structure, and you know what your resources are, and how you are affected by the subject.

(b) Isaiah LIII:11. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Christ's satisfaction with the result of His sufferings. We may be glad to have His judgment, as He only can estimate His sufferings and their stupendous results. You may view the satisfaction as: first, relative; second, absolute. e. g. A man who has purchased a farm may be satisfied with his bargain, as he thinks he has got the worth of his money, that is, he is relatively satisfied, but he would like to have a far better farm and so he is not absolutely satisfied. The eye of faith is thus directed to Christ's

knowledge, and then to His love for His people. Underlying this, there are the grand truths of Christ's love revealed in His sufferings for His people, and in the blessedness which He desires and secures for them.

(c) II Chron. XII:14. "And he did evil because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord." Subject: Applying the heart to seek the Lord, the condition of a truly good life. 1. Applying the heart to seek the Lord means a most earnest desire to enjoy God's favor, great steadfastness of purpose. 2. The condition, a. because they that truly seek the Lord must hate evil. b. They are brought under the most powerful motives to do His will; and they have the promise of all needed grace to help them. A negative statement is here converted into a positive, which is most desirable. There is a causal relation here which secures unity; and there is movement from understanding and desire to strenuous effort.

(d) Matt. XI:5, last clause, "The poor have the Gospel preached to them." Distinctive characteristics of Christ's Messiahship. Reasons: First, the religion of Christ is not intended for a favored class, but for the human race—the great mass in all ages being poor. Christ's religion is the only universal religion that ever existed. Second, the poor are the best prepared to receive and welcome it.

11. Subjective. "The subject must be suited to the preacher's spiritual perception at the time and to his peculiar disposition." It must exactly corres-

pond to the state of the mind that invented it. Thus the preacher holds firmly and confidently the idea embodied in his subject; he realizes its value and force; and he is affected by it as he desires his hearers to be affected. It is only thus he can compose and speak with affection. This is a specific characteristic of great value. As his spiritual perceptions and dispositions may vary very much, a valuable subject may lose its suitableness to his spiritual state. Hence, he will not be able to write and deliver it as he ought. A preacher should not be content to invent a valuable subject, but he must seek to have his mind imbued and enflamed by it at the time of composing as well as at the time of delivering it. This accounts for the fact that he often delivers an old sermon with greater comfort and power than a new one. Hence, M. Coquerel says that "a man's best sermon is the one of which he is most thoroughly master."

DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT

We come now to the discussion of the subject, which is the second part of our work.

It is assumed that we understand what is meant by a rhetorical subject, one that has a definite practical aim. We know, also, what is meant by a definite purpose in speaking, namely, a definite object to be gained by the discussion of the subject. We understand the nature of the unity which the subject should possess. It is assumed that we now have such a subject; a subject, too, presented in such a form as to be easily and fully understood, and easily proved and explained in an orderly, logical manner. We bring all this with us from the discussion of the first part.

The discussion of the subject which is now to engage our attention may be divided into two parts, *method* and *rhetorical development.*

By method all the persuasive power contained in your subject, or as much of it as may serve your purpose, may be brought out; and by rhetorical development it may be applied to the whole mind of your hearers. The one is an objective, and the other is a subjective process. Method indicates the

manner in which the subject is presented to the understanding by explanation and proof; rhetorical development is for the purpose of excitation and persuasion. It is easy to see that these two processes must be combined in religious discourse. We have no right to excite without the instrumentality of truth presented to the understanding. On the other hand, we have no right to address the understanding without exciting feeling and thus influencing the will.

I. Method. In explanation, very much depends on method. If the method is faulty, irrelevant matter, which is enfeebling, is sure to be brought in, and by it attention is distracted and patience exhausted; or some important part is omitted.

It is often difficult in hearing a sermon to discover what the preacher is aiming at. This difficulty is not greatly diminished by his stating precisely what he has in view, as it is not easy to see from his method how he is ever going to reach it. The generality of hearers understand only a small part of a sermon, and by a still smaller part are they at all affected. It is confusion in method that makes discourses mainly unintelligible.

This is a much greater fault in preaching the Gospel than in any other kind of popular discourse. Preaching is the most didactic kind of oratory, as has already been stated. It is intended to lodge in the mind a large amount of truth, as what it contemplates is not a momentary impression, leading perhaps to one act or effort, but a powerful impres-

sion to mould the character and influence the conduct permanently. Without a good method, people will not, and indeed cannot, admit so much into their minds, nor will they be able to understand it or to recall it when needed. It is this that gives people occasion to complain of doctrinal preaching. Were correct rhetorical method observed, there would be little complaint, and a minister might preach doctrines to his heart's content and as long as he lived.

Method is required not only in the grand outlines, but also in its subordinate parts and minute details, and indeed in the whole tissue of discourse. If there is not method in explanation, parts of discourse are not connected and, of course, are dry and uninteresting. Continuity of thought in such a case is out of the question, and, without it, there can be no continuity of interest and feeling. Without method in explanation you cannot penetrate beneath the surface of your subject, or of your hearers' minds.

Rhetorical explanation is not, like grammatical, an explanation of words or phrases, but of important truths or ideas. It is, for example, one thing to explain the words "effectual calling," and to quote many passages referring to it, and to indicate the duty of complying with it; but it is a different thing to analyze this great abstract term, and show that it includes enlightening the mind in the knowledge of the truth by the Holy Spirit, and renewing the will and disposing and enabling us to comply with it. Thus explanation, by analysis, penetrates ino the

depths of the subject and the hearts of the hearers. If there be not some important idea or principle, and that, too, analyzed, in a sermon, the sermon will be quite empty; it will have no body in it at all. You cannot give prominence and power to the leading idea of your discourse by piling up adjectives, or smothering it in words or figures. It must be analyzed or it must be proved methodically and adequately, and will thus be the body of the sermon.

Since so much depends on rhetorical explanation, no labor should be spared to acquire a knowledge of it and skill in the practice of it. For a preacher to think that he can dispense with this is as great a mistake as for a student of arithmetic to think that he can dispense with multiplication and division. It is well to avail ourselves of all the help that can be derived from logic, especially the department of it that deals with concepts and abstracts. Indeed, beyond this, in explanation, we need not go.

II. The other part of the discussion is that which, for want of a better name, I have called RHETORICAL DEVELOPMENT. This has specially in view excitation and persuasion. While explanation relates to the understanding, rhetorical development relates to the powers of the mind.

I know that it is not well in many cases to explain fully, in advance, what one aims at; yet this may be done if needed in the interest of perspicuity in such a way as not to anticipate interest. Besides, explanation as considered here refers merely to the grand outlines of the discourse.

I would say then, that while we have to deal with both the understanding and the emotions, in the one case to impart knowledge, in the other to excite feelings, and thus influence the will; yet in doing both I depend entirely and avowedly on the subject. I address the understanding so as to impart practical information, and also to excite emotion; and I use the same subject in both cases, and depend on the same process of explanation and proof, whether the purpose be explanation or excitation. This must be so, if the only feelings we rely on are of a moral or religious nature. These are the only feelings that can be of any real use to the preacher of the Gospel; and these feelings are reasonable and they are subject to reason. Thus they must be excited by truth in the understanding. If there is power in the truth of your subject, and if the truth can be so presented to the understanding as to exert its full power, if the presentation of the truth produces friction in the mind for a considerable time and if the subject is presented in such aspects as are fitted to increase the friction and the interest, the hearer will be affected as he should be by the subject. He will be excited from within by the truth in his mind, and not by sympathy, or by pictures of good or evil presented to his imagination. If these statements are correct, you can easily see the great importance which must belong to the subject and to the explanation and the proof of it.

These introductory references to the fundamental principles of my teaching are here stated to show

the importance of the subject and of its explanation and proof. As we intend to base discussion entirely on these principles, they will, in due time, become familiar; still a general view in advance will be very helpful, if you intend to master the whole. The subject is our sheet anchor; if we lose it, there is nothing to prevent our being dashed on the rocks or stuck fast in the quicksand.

A word in regard to logic. It is not our work to teach logic, but it is ours to teach how logical principles are to be used in the construction of persuasive discourse. Logic is taught in the Arts course in our colleges on account of its great educational value, but here it is used as an indispensable and admirable instrument in the construction of discourse. It is easy to see that if we use logic as now indicated, we are in the sphere of rhetoric, so that we could dispense with Scripture texts. But we shall use Scripture texts, because we are studying homiletics already defined. Having made these introductory statements, we shall now address ourselves to method.

METHOD IN GENERAL.

The Scholastic Method may be stated for the sake of illustration, as it is strictly logical. This requires that a strict proposition be constructed, and that the heads of discourses be the subject, predicate and copula. It is clear that if you explain the subject and predicate, and establish the copula by proof,

all is done that can possibly be done. e. g. "Great patriots are courageous." 1. Who are great patriots? 2. In what sense courageousness is predicated of them. 3. Prove the statement. The fault of this method is that it does all these three things in one discourse, producing intolerable sameness. It makes the main subject always one of three heads; and while stating what should be explained and proved, throws no light on either topic. Whereas, if you wish to prove a proposition you can explain the subject and predicate in the introduction, and then establish the copula by a series of proofs which will furnish the main outlines of the sermon. Or, should the proofs be "analytic," i. e., contained in the terms of the proposition, the mere explanation of the terms will show their agreement, so that arguments will not be needed.

It is clear that in proving the statement "God is love," you must adduce synthetic proof; while in the statement, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," you must find proof that is analytic, i. e., in the terms of the proposition. So also, "duelling was a crime of the dark ages" (synthetic). "Duelling is murder" (analytic). It is possible to combine the two kinds of proof, which should then be the two main heads, e. g., "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, etc." 1. The congruity between dying in the Lord and being blessed (analytic). 2. The testimony of the Spirit (synthetic). In this case, of course, the discourse is called confirmatory. If it were made on the first proof alone,

it would be explanatory. Of course, the analytic should be placed first, as it is proper to explain a thing before you endeavor to prove it.

The Scholastic Method is valuable because it shows all that can be done in discoursing on a subject. Its main defect also shows the necessity of determining how you are to treat a subject—whether your main purpose is to explain or prove it. This will determine whether its outlines are to be explanatory or confirmatory, or both combined.

EXPLANATION IN GENERAL.

Explanation is a very important part of method and should be logical. Logical principles of explanation must guide in rhetorical discourse. Conformity to these will make a discourse clear, orderly and easily composed and understood. It will also bring out the full meaning of your subject and place it in one field of view. It will also secure such accurate arrangement of the discourse as will secure continuity of thought and interest, from beginning to end, and exclude effectually all irrelevant matter and illustrations. Such plainness of speech will not offend the educated, while it will greatly facilitate the apprehension of the illiterate, especially if the words used are such as they can understand. It will also make the composition and the delivery of the sermon easy and pleasant to the preacher.

It is convenient to confine our attention to the

logical products of thought, as these can be logically explained. We shall—leaving out percepts—confine our attention to concepts and abstracts. By percepts I mean single concrete objects which we apprehend by the exercise of our senses. Concepts and abstracts can be logically explained, and they contain most of our knowledge in a concentrated form. These concepts are called class-words, general terms, or universals. If you state the species or the individuals included in the class you divide it logically or explain it through species. e. g. You explain "great patriots" by logical division by naming Moses, Brutus, Washington, etc. These must be co-ordinate, and when put together they are supposed to constitute the class. Any one of the species or individuals is entitled to the name of the class; e. g. Moses was a great patriot. Divide men as a class or universal, and you have ethnologically, Caucasian, Mongolian, Malay, Ethiopian, and American Indian; or geographically, European, African, American, etc. A class is formed by adding two or more subjects having a common predicate, e. g. Plato is rational animal; Socrates is rational animal; Cicero is rational animal; thus a class is formed and it is designated "Man," the judgments out of which it is formed being allowed to drop. The parts constituting the class must be co-ordinate. The division would be faulty were you to leave out Ethiopian; it would also be defective. It would likewise be faulty in another aspect were you to insert "Germans." In this case

the law of co-ordination would not be respected. Germans, Italians and Frenchmen would have to be reached by a subordinate division, of which Europeans would be the superordinate.

You might make moral excellence a principle of division, as this belongs to man as rational. You might make color the principle of division, as this belongs to man as animal. You would then have white men, black men, red men and copper-colored men. The principle of division might be any quality in the "base," which is "rational animal." This principle must be strictly adhered to. But the principle of division must be such as is suitable to the purpose or aim of the discourse. If you were viewing men according to moral character it would not be proper to divide them according to color; this would be a principle of division found in the animal part of their nature, not the rational, to which moral character belongs.

Thus you explain a class or universal or general term, by stating the species or individuals—which are similar parts of it—of which it is composed. To effect this you view "Man" in extensive quantity or in extension; and you explain "man" by division when you state all the species; in exemplification you explain the class by stating one of its species; in comparison or contrast, you explain the class by comparing or contrasting two of its species; and indirectly by analogy, you explain not by comparing or contrasting things but their relations.

Two things may be connected by analogy, though

they have in themselves no resemblance, for analogy is the resemblance of ratios or relations; thus as a sweet taste satisfies the palate, so does a sweet sound gratify the ear; and hence, the same word, sweet, is applied to both, though no flavor can resemble a sound in itself; so the leg of a table does not resemble that of a man, nor the foot of a mountain that of an animal; but the leg answers the same purpose to the table as the leg of an animal to that animal.—(Whately's Logic, page 176.)

The rule for reasoning by analogy is, that if two or more things resemble each other in many points, they will probably resemble each other in more points. When many things resemble each other in a few properties, we argue about them by generalization. When a few things resemble each other in many properties, it is a case of analogy. In order to be clear about our conclusions we ought never to rest satisfied with mere analogy, but to try to discover the general laws governing the case. The case of Mars having an atmosphere like ours is not proof that it has trees and animals like our world. It seems that an element of causation is needed in reasoning from analogy.

It is manifest that this discussion of concepts must be of great value in the construction of discourse. We have a clear view of many plans of explanatory discourses which are all strictly logical.

In a generic or class-word, we have division, exemplification, comparison, contrast and analogy. Further, in concept in comprehension, we have a

method of analysis and a principle of guidance in dealing with abstracts. We have thus seven forms of discourse in explanation; and a great amount of guidance in explanation which is of use in the whole tissue of discourse, whatever may be the form of it. And if we practice such methods of explanation, we shall have a splendid training in discourse. In the methods which we suggest or explain, we shall fully avail ourselves of these logical principles.

It is required that the principle of division or analysis found in the base be not only suited to your purpose, but that it be ONE.

The class "man" is bound together by the attributes "rational animal," which are predicated of every one to secure his admission into it, and to retain him in the class. Of course, "animal" in a statement like this, is not used as a class-word at all so as to be capable of division, but it is a part of the complex attribute "rational animal." Without these or other qualities a class could not be formed at all.

Let us remember that a class-word or general term can be viewed either in extension or comprehension. These are not words suited to make this distinction always apparent. Thus man may be viewed in either quantity, i. e., either a subject word or as an attribute word. The quantity cannot, in general, be indicated by the form of the word, but by the purpose in your mind. e. g. "The alligator is a serpent" may mean either that it is a

species of the class serpent, or it may mean that it has qualities that characterize serpents. Still, this form of expression is generally used in extensive quantity, although it may as well indicate comprehension.

"According to the account now given, every general notion embraces two things: it embraces objects and it embraces attributes. Thus the notion Vertebrata comprises objects, viz: all animals possessing the common properties; and it also implies an attribute, the possession by all the animals of a vertebrate column. The former of these is called by logicians the Extension, and the latter the Comprehension or Intention of a notion. The notion Rational Being is said to have Extension, inasmuch as it embraces all objects possessing reason; and Comprehension, inasmuch as all these possess the attribute of reason. The Extension of a notion is reached specially by generalization as above described; the Comprehension specially by abstraction, that is, by fixing on marks. It is clear that some notions have greater Extension than others; thus man has greater extension than Frenchman; that is, it embraces a greater number of beings. Some notions, again, have greater Comprehension than others: thus Frenchman has greater comprehension than man, for he has all the attributes found in mankind generally, and some peculiar to those who dwell in France. It is evident that the greater Extension of a term, that is, the number of objects denoted by it, has the less Comprehension, that

is, fewer attributes common to the objects; and vice versa, the more the Comprehension of a term, that is, the number of marks possessed by all the objects, the less its Extension, that is, the fewer are the objects possessing the whole of them."—Dr. McCosh.

You see the meaning of Dr. McCosh's remark relating to the importance of understanding whether you discuss a class in extension or in comprehension. Thus to divide mankind as a class, you must find the principle of division in the base, that is, in the common predicate, "rational animal." These are the attributes on which the class is formed. The class is bound together by these attributes; all have them. The principle of division must be found either in his mind or body.

If you divide man as accountable, you must adopt a moral principle; if nationally, another principle; if according to his relation to mankind, another principle, etc. But if you adopt several principles there will be hopeless confusion, as when you divide mankind thus: Hypocrites, Europeans, Negroes, Frenchmen, ignorant persons, murderers, Roman Catholics and blacksmiths. Divisions made on several principles are called cross-divisions. They are often unconsciously made in abstract themes. The confusion thus introduced into a discourse is proportionate to the number of the principles, and to the degree of their mutual incompatibility. It is a matter of much importance to keep in view and to hold fast the four leading classes of attributes.

These are the *essential* attributes of *quality* and *causation;* and the *relative* attributes of *condition* and *relation.*

Then, parts reached by this division overlap one another. A man may be a European, a Frenchman, a Roman Catholic, an ignorant person, a hypocrite, a murderer and a blacksmith. Further, the law of co-ordination is not respected, as a man may be a European and also a Frenchman—indeed, the former includes the latter. It may be said that no one would make a division so confused and useless, unless he tried to do so. This is true, so far as external things are concerned, but it is quite possible to make such mistakes in dealing with things internal or spiritual. Hence, even well-educated and able speakers require to be always on their guard, especially in forming the grand outlines of a sermon or speech.

The importance of this is easily seen. If you divide you must have one principle of division. If there are several principles of division or analogy crossing one another they will produce much confusion. If, for example, in writing a discourse a person feels that he cannot keep the discussion of the heads from conflicting with one another; if he feels that he cannot proceed, he will find that he is either attempting to divide without a principle to guide him or that he has several principles.

On the other hand, it is easy to see that as a class is necessarily bound together by some common attributes, these attributes can be subjected to anal-

ysis. e. g., the class "patriots" is formed by uniting those who ardently love their country. "Man" as a class is formed of those who are united by all the attributes included in rational animal. It is on these as its base the class is formed. Without the common attributes they could not be formed into a class at all. Now, when the common attribute is subjected to analysis, the class is viewed in comprehension or in comprehensive quantity, and the analysis reveals the simpler attributes of which the complex attribute or bundle of attributes is composed. This I purpose to call "analysis." This is not strictly correct, as the meaning of analysis is more extensive even than division. But I cannot find a more suitable term and I shall use analysis in this sense only.

By this we reach attributes, not species; and one attribute cannot have the name of a complex attribute. e. g., "Man" viewed in comprehension is composed of the attributes included in "rational animal." By subjecting "rational" to analysis, we have understanding, sensibility, and will. The common subject in a concept, viewed in comprehension, is called its base; and the common predicate in a concept, viewed in extension, is called its base. e. g. To analyze "Man" you must find the principle of analysis in the base; thus, "Mankind depraved" may be analyzed as, blind to all that is spiritually good, alienated from God in holiness, and rebellious against God's authority. Thus the depravity pervades all his faculties of mind. To divide mankind

you must first find the principle of division in the base, i. e., some attribute found in rational or in animal, i. e., either in his mind or in his body. As these attributes are innumerable, you can easily select one suited to your purpose, whether it be psychological or physiological.

We have seen that the logical products of thought are concepts or class-words, and abstracts. We have seen also how concepts are formed and how they are divided and analyzed.

The abstract cannot be viewed in extension, i. e., as a class, as it has no base, in which a principle of analysis can be found. Help may be obtained by converting it into a class. e. g. "God is love," love is an abstract, a very comprehensive quality. It means that God is a benevolent being. Now the benevolent are a great class, at the head of which God is pre-eminent. The question is how the benevolent act towards others so as to entitle them to be so designated. Especially would we ask how God viewed as benevolent manifests this quality. 1. He is complacent to the good. 2. He is merciful to the sinful and compassionate to the miserable. Love is equal to complacency, mercy and compassion. We do not say, however, that these are strictly co-ordinate. We have here God's treatment of the good and the not-good. They cannot be called class-words, but it is easy to see that if a person acquires great facility in discussing concepts in comprehensive quality, i. e., in analyzing them, he will, in the course of time, have little difficulty with ab-

stracts. What is now suggested seems partly justified by the tendency of many abstracts to become concepts or class-words. Virtue, for example, is a very high abstract; yet people speak of Christian virtues, or what amounts to the same thing—a virtue. Art is an abstract; yet we speak of painting, sculpture and architecture as arts. The preaching of the Gospel abounds in the discussion of abstracts.

It may be asked why we devote so much time to concepts and abstracts. Our reply is because of the need of analyzing or dividing subjects according to the laws of thought, to the great edification and delight of Christian congregations who are intelligent. It would be well to ask why compel our students to study logic, as they are required to study demonstrative mathematics, for these seek merely the general educational value, and not teach them the laws of thought that they may find in them principles to guide in the construction of persuasive discourse?

METHODS OF SERMONS

CHAPTER VIII

METHODS OF SERMONS

Methods may be divided into two classes, according to their form; the Simple and the Complex.

In the common three-fold division of sermon method into the Topical, Textual and Expository; the first has generally a fraction of a text; the second a text which is more extensive and generally contains several important ideas; the third a still more extended passage which is supposed to be discussed exegetically. This classification is based on the text as we indicated in an earlier part, and not on the subject invented out of the text. The elements of this classification cannot be accurately distinguished; besides, rhetoric being a formal science has mainly to do with the form of discourse, which is not the basis of this classification at all.

I. SIMPLE METHODS.

However, what is called the Topical method very nearly resembles what we now call the Simple method as distinguished from the Complex. This method is strictly logical. Dr. Shedd defines it thus: "It is a method in which there is a single

idea, or a definite subject, that can be accurately and fully stated in a brief title." This is the best attempt at a definition of it that we have ever seen. He does not mention a text at all, but speaks of a single idea or a definite subject. Now this is what we contend for in every sermon. There must be a definite subject. But this, of course, cannot distinguish it from other methods. And a single idea or definite subject may be expressed either in a brief or an extended statement. I take the liberty of supplementing Dr. Shedd's definition with the following words, "and in which the heads are furnished (a) either by the logical division or analysis of the theme, or (b) by a series of proofs or arguments."

This is the simplest possible form of a discourse and is strictly logical. It requires that the heads or outlines be furnished, when explanatory, either by the division or analysis of the theme, but not by both; or instead of having either division or analysis that it have for heads a series of proofs or arguments. The simple method, therefore, must be either *explanatory,* as when you divide or analyze it, or *confirmatory,* as when your heads are a series of proofs.

Such a method of discourse, having a definite subject must make a decided and definite impression, and being simple in its structure it can be easily and fully understood and remembered, so that the impression may be retained or reproduced at pleasure. Facility in this kind of discussion must

be of great educational value; for it teaches not only to construct a symmetrical and graceful outline of one kind of discourse, but also to discuss the details of every possible discourse; and above all, it teaches how to think, as it is according to the laws of thought. We shall now consider

THE SIMPLE EXPLANATORY METHOD.

In this the theme is viewed (a) in *extension,* and is divided by stating the specific or similar parts of which it is composed, which are said to be contained under it; or (b) in *comprehension,* and is analyzed by presenting its component attributes, which are said to be contained in it. The following rules should be observed in logical division:

1. The constituent parts must exclude one another. 2. They must, when added, be equal to the genus. 3. Division must be founded on one principle or basis. 4. Subordinate species must be contained under the superordinate. These rules are copied from Sir William Hamilton's Logic. The meaning of them is obvious. The specific parts must not overlap; they must exhaust the subject; they must be made on one principle; while the law of co-ordinates and subordinates must be respected. The importance of the last is easily seen thus: you cannot properly divide Britain in the following manner: England, Yorkshire, Scotland, Perthshire and the coal and iron mines. This is opposed to Nos. 4, 1 and 3.

Rules for logical analysis are nearly the same. The parts thus reached are not similar parts, but they are characteristics, i. e., attributes. The statement of these must be exhaustive, they must be coordinate. The following examples of logical division may be given:—

(a) In extension.—II Cor. V:10, first clause, "Judgment will be universal; all must be there." I. Those to whom it is properly alarming, first, those who live in the practice of sin—the ungodly and the immoral; second, those in addition to this who refuse God's salvation—sceptics, self-righteous persons or self deceivers. (This distinction was made by the Lord, Matt. XI:20-24.) II. Those to whom it will be most desirable, as they will then be acknowledged and acquitted, etc. The four rules are all respected in this. 1. Constituent parts here exclude one another; 2. they exhaust the subject; 3. the division is made on one principle, a moral principle suited to the judgment. It would be absurd to use a geographical principle, European, Asiatics, Africans and Americans; it would be wrong to use an ethnological principle; it would be wrong to divide them according to the color of their skin. These are not matters to be taken into account in the judgment. It would lead to much confusion if all these principles of division were used. However, I read long ago a sermon in which the geographical and ethnological principles of division were both used. This

gave ample scope to the preacher's descriptive powers, but it weakened the moral power of the discourse. 4. Subordinate species are included under superordinate.

It is important to make the distinction between the sub-heads, i. e., between those who have not only sinned, but have also rejected the remedy. Our Lord institutes a comparison between the guilt of the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, and those of Tyre and Sidon; and another comparison between those of Capernaum and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The bad pre-eminence belongs to Capernaum. Were this distinction fully recognized it would remove many objections to the doctrine of future punishment. The heathen would not be punished for rejecting the remedy of which they never heard. It would also be an element of power in dealing with those who undervalue Gospel privileges and blessings. Should you be pleased to make a discourse on the first part, the subject would then be merely the first head itself, with the two subheads as the main outlines.

II Peter I:4, first clause, "Promises exceeding great and precious." 1. Promises of spiritual blessings to be enjoyed now, justification, grace needed to sanctify, and fellowship with God. 2. Promises of spiritual blessings to be enjoyed hereafter, admission into Heaven, seeing God, enjoying His favor and serving Him. All rules are respected here except the fourth, which is not needed in this case. The manner of discussing these is important. The

blessings to be enjoyed now are carefully arranged and are exhaustive. The blessings to be enjoyed hereafter are carefully arranged and are exhaustive. The arrangement is also psychological: seeing God, enjoying His favor and serving Him correspond to the understanding, the emotional nature and the will. Thus method pervades not only the grand outlines, but also the whole matter of the discourse.

It should be noticed that although the subject here lies on the very surface of the text, and the heads are sufficiently manifest at first sight, yet most earnest thinking is needed in the discussion. Many think that if they find a subject and general plan all they have to do is to discuss it in an off-hand manner. This is a very great mistake, and must often lead to disappointment and failure. The filling up of the frame requires to be as strictly methodical as the outlines. A person may have an excellent text and subject and plan and yet fail either to edify or persuade for want of suitable matter.

Another principle of division would give the following parts: I. Promises relating to temporal things. II. Promises relating to spiritual things. Or, I. Promsies made to the Church. II. Special promises made to individuals. The first division is suited to the Apostle's meaning. In it all the rules are respected. In this method on II Peter here suggested, the danger is of overlapping. But there is a real distinction between blessings promised to the pious in their collective capacity and those promised to them individually. Persons whose minds are

developed can discuss heads lying much closer together without mixing them. A mere line drawn with the pen seems quite sufficient to keep them apart; while others would require a high, massive stone wall.

The precepts of the moral law are a class. They are divided into two tables. The first includes duties which we owe directly to God. The second includes duties which we owe to our neighbor. Moses makes the same division in Deut. VI:5 and Lev. XIX:18, combined. The Lord recognizes the same division in Matt. XXII:36-40. It is not very easy to see at what point the line of division should be drawn.

It is important to become familiar with the process of logical division. It is not enough merely to understand it. Skill in the use of it must be acquired by practice. This is a good mental discipline that will enable a mind to grasp a subject firmly, and to unfold it clearly and distinctly for the edification of a congregation. It will also greatly aid the faculty of invention.

(b) In comprehension, by analysis. e. g. "Christian benevolence" is an abstract. Make it universal, viz: "Benevolence" viewed in relation to Christians. Consider the manner in which they should act or feel towards others. They specially love persons of the same character as themselves; they are forgiving to those who injure them, not rendering evil for evil, but the opposite; they feel deeply for those who are miserable, especially spir-

itually miserable. "Christian benevolence" is fraternal love and love to all mankind.

It is a great thing to be able to divide or analyze concepts or general notions and also abstracts. Our religious knowledge is mainly treasured up in abstracts. Salvation is an abstract; so is eternal life. "Piety towards God" is an abstract. It comprehends holy reverence towards Him; and also love of His character, including gratitude and dependence.

"The influence of the Gospel on man as rational" is an abstract. 1. On the understanding, enlightening it in the knowledge of God and divine things. 2. On the conscience and heart, stimulating and satisfying the conscience, and giving true peace. 3. On the will or disposition, changing or improving it. The complex nature of the abstracts is here revealed in relation to the various parts of man's nature that are brought under the influence of the Gospel. There is here also an attribute of causation. The rule for analysis is complied with. There is here a principle at work enlightening, quickening and moulding.

"The rest that Christ promises," Matt. XI:28-30, is an abstract. 1. Rest from the working of a servile spirit produced by erroneous views of the ceremonial law, or of the moral law viewed as a covenant of works. 2. Rest from the spiritual conflict of an awakened conscience. 3. Rest from moral strivings or aims, *i. e.*, rest pervading the whole mind. Thus by an attribute of relation the

"rest" is analyzed. The characters here are co-ordinate and they are exhaustive. If you were to add any other character the analysis would be faulty. If you were to omit any of these it would be defective. How deep this rest is! The invitation here given is not addressed to all mankind, but to those who are weary and heavy laden. Upon this supposition the analysis is made. Such only are capable of resting. Rest is a relative term.

How much better is this analysis than the common practice, in such cases, of quoting many beautiful passages which refer to rest and then resorting to illustrations borrowed from physical rest which are not relevant here. This is a purely superficial process, while the analysis penetrates into the heart of the thing and into the religious nature of the hearers. The preaching of the Gospel by producing conviction of guilt, sin and helplessness is fitted to produce a state of unrest, which prepares the soul to seek rest from Christ. But the explanation of the rest, as in the method here presented, may be the means of revealing the want of it, and exciting the desire to obtain it. Thus the truths that are adapted to increase the faith and comfort of believers are also fitted to lead the unbelieving to the exercise of faith in Christ who only can give rest. A great many Gospel or religious invitations are not general, although they seem to be so. e. g. Isaiah LV:1, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." This is a definite class—those who are painfully awakened to a sense of want of the chief good

which alone can satisfy. The old divines were wont to call such persons "sensible sinners."

Acts XV:3, last clause. "The great joy of all the brethren" is an abstract. 1. Philanthropic joy, because the barrier was broken down, and Gentiles were brought into the Church. 2. Pious joy, because God is glorified, and because the harmony between the Old Testament Church and the New was demonstrated. The joy is stated or explained in relation to the salvation of the Gentiles. There is also its relation to the glory of God. The latter relation is stated by the Apostle James in Acts XV:16, and also XI:18. Thus there were two elements in the great joy, these relating to two parties. These are co-ordinate and exhaustive.

"The disinterestedness of Moses is an abstract. 1. He refused Egyptian distinction and emolument, he was unwilling to be leader of Israel, and he never sought personal aggrandizement when promoted. 2. He devoted his thoughts and energies to the welfare of Israel, although his generosity was not appreciated, and to God's glory. "Disinterestedness," according to Worcester, means "freedom from, and disregard of, private interest." This is here demonstrated by seeking the advantage, not of himself, but of others. The relation is to himself and to others. These two are co-ordinate and exhaustive.

A great many abstracts and concepts viewed in comprehension may be analyzed by relation to other objects. It is interesting to notice that unity is preserved in discussing the influence on man as ra-

tional by showing its influence on the various faculties of the mind. Regard must here be had to psychology. The parts referred to are co-ordinate and they are exhaustive. This penetrates into the very heart of the disinterestedness, which is thus analyzed.

Some may consider this a stiff method of discussion, but it is not so. It is in perfect accord with the laws of thought. It must be easily understood by learned and unlearned alike. It is not needed that either should understand these laws; it is enough that they understand your sermon and feel its power. It is absurd to suppose that you can make it plain to the illiterate by making it illogical. It is needless to explain to your hearers the laws of thought, as this has nothing to do with your moral purpose in addressing them. There need not be a stiff and emphatic statement of your correct heads of discourse, so long as you are guided by them. Common people will understand any sermon if it is logical in its structure and if they understand the meaning of the words that you use. But this demands that the things to which the relation refers be co-ordinate, reached on one principle, and exhaustive.

I Kings XIX:12, last clause. Subject: Suitableness of the manner in which God addresses mankind, especially in the Gospel. A few introductory remarks will show that the Word of God is fitted to produce a deeper impression than the most terrible phenomena in nature. The prophet was most

deeply impressed when he heard the voice. The still small voice of God might well represent or illustrate the preaching of the Gospel. Our Lord said, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." All who saw Lazarus raised from the dead were not convinced that Christ was the Messiah.

The manner in which God addresses mankind is: 1. Suitable to the nature of the Gospel message. 2. Suitable to the powers and affections addressed and to the Spirits' influences by which it is rendered effectual. The relation here is to the remedy and to the method of its application. These are two things which should always be distinguished. This furnishes a valuable and fundamental principle of classification. These are different parts of Christ's redemptive work. See Romans V:10, Acts V:31. The distinction between the remedy and its application should always be recognized. They may occur in the same discourse, but they should not be mixed. This fundamental distinction will direct in the structure of very many discourses, and also in the invention of many subjects.

Luke XXIV:8. "The advantage of remembering Christ's words by Christians in various states." 1. When they sink into comparative unbelief as the disciples had done. 2. When they are distressed by severe afflictions or by guilt on the conscience. It would not do to add a third, viz: when in the enjoyment of great spiritual happiness, as this would

not be co-ordinate, because the other two refer to states of spiritual distress. Should it be desirable to introduce this element, the first analysis should be: 1. When in spiritual distress. 2. When in the enjoyment of spiritual happiness. Then the former analysis might guide in the discussion of the first head.

Mark VIII:1-21. Conflict of feelings in our Lord's mind occasioned by the conduct of the three parties referred to. Relation: 1. Compassion towards the multitude. 2. Displeasure towards the Pharisees and His disciples. This too is a state or condition of our Lord's mind—the complex and painful feelings. This last example is presented to show that a single explanatory method may be adapted to the discussion of an extended portion of the Scripture, if this be desired. This refutes the notion referred to, that it is the extent or amount of text that determines the method.

The examples given are all simple, explanatory. The method of discussion in all of them is furnished by explanation. They are called simple because the method is furnished by explanation alone. In one class the heads are reached by logical division, i. e., in extensive quantity; in the other class the heads are reached by analysis, i. e., in comprehensive quantity. We do not wish to convey the idea that these examples present the best methods of discussing these subjects, but they are presented merely as ex-

planatory of what we call the Simple Explanatory Method.

THE SIMPLE CONFIRMATORY METHOD.

In this a statement is proved by a series of arguments, the distinct branches of which furnish the main outlines of a sermon.

Luke XIV:15-24. "There is nothing to exclude anyone to whom the invitation is addressed from the feast referred to, except refusing the invitation." 1. Because no one will be excluded on account of personal unworthiness. 2. Because no one will be excluded for want of room or of provisions, or of willingness on the part of the Master to receive him. These proofs are co-ordinate and exhaustive.

The only possible difficulty in obtaining admission must be found either in the guests or in the host. All the moral obstacles—and only moral obstacles are relevant here—in the persons invited are included under personal worthiness. This includes all the things that intimidate poor sinners when awakened; their reasons for not coming admit all this, while they show how potent worldliness is to prevent the reception of the Gospel. There can be no obstacle on the part of the Host, if He has room, resources and unbounded hospitality, and has given the invitation. These two reasons dispose of the whole case, and show the sinner that he may come, and also that coming will be his highest interest, as well as pleasing and glori-

fying to God. This, the persons admit, while they state merely their own unwillingness and that due to worldliness.

Romans VII :7-13: "The inability of the law to destroy sin in the soul." 1. Because the law reveals sin. 2. Because the law exasperates sin, and thus furnishes the occasion of sin working death, exerting its most deadly power. The proof here is very clear. Explanation is needed, but this plain statement teaches how and what to explain. But, as the two heads are proofs, the method is confirmatory in its structure.

It is here seen how easy it is to treat an extended portion of Scripture by a "Simple Confirmatory" method. Of course, sin is here personified. It means natural depravity. It is called in verse 20, sin dwelling in a person. This is the origin of the phrase "indwelling sin." It is not the external prohibitions of the law that reveal this sin, but it is the spirituality of the law that does this. It is the commandment, "thou shalt not covet" that reveals sin in the soul. "When the commandment came" it revealed the spirituality of the law; it provoked violent opposition. If a preacher does not understand the distinction here made, he will never be able to touch the conscience unless it be accidentally. The same distinction is made in the 51st Psalm.

I John IV:9-10: "Proof that God is love." 1. Because He sent His only begotten Son into the world to be a propitiation for our sins. 2. Be-

cause He sent His Son that we might live through Him, i. e., enjoy spiritual life through Him, now and hereafter. These are the grand proofs of love—making sacrifices for the sake of its objects, and endeavoring to promote their happiness. These proofs are contained in the text; they are exhaustive; the revelation here is love towards men as guilty and love towards men as miserable. You cannot state a third proof that should be co-ordinate. Any other proof must be placed under either of these. Thus the method is exhaustive. Unity is secured. Indeed, there is a relation between these, such as exists between means and end, as the sacrifice was made with a view of securing the happiness of the loved objects. (The order in which those evidences of love is placed may be inverted, if preferred.)

Jeremiah II: 1-13: "The great wickedness of retrograding in a religious life." 1. Because it reveals ingratitude towards God, specially aggravated in the case of the Israelites, in view of God's great kindness towards them. 2. Because it was ruinous to themselves. The magnitude of the people's sin should precede the statement of consequences. The bad quality is revealed: First, in relation to God; second, in relation to themselves.

This, like the example in Romans VII., may be of use in showing how an extensive text which admits a good deal of exegesis may be discussed in a "simple confirmatory" method. There is here an historical lesson suited to all ages. Indeed, the

more concrete the theme is so much the better, provided that unity and other rhetorical qualities are secured.

Luke XI: 13: "The great encouragement the Lord gives to pray for the Holy Spirit." First, because the gift of the Holy Spirit is inexpressibly great; it includes all spiritual "good things," faith, repentance, spiritual life, comfort, preparation for Heaven. Second, because we have the strongest assurance that such prayer will be heard, by divine faithfulness and the paternal love of God, and His purpose to save sinners. Powerful incentives to seek an object are furnished by its immense value and the assurance that it is obtainable.

It would be easy to give this a complex form and to show: 1. What is meant by giving the Holy Spirit. 2. What encouragement or motives we have to ask. Both methods are correct. But, were the complex method adopted, there would be a strong temptation to make the first Head purely didactic, and, while discussing it, to lose sight of the object we should have in view. On the other hand, by taking the simple method you are compelled when explaining to keep the end in view, i. e., to lead people to pray for this gift. This would make a more powerful discourse, having greater directness of aim.

The idea of possibility in the second head would be a powerful incentive to prayer or effort. The idea of possibility is of great value. Without this, arguments may be accumulated in vain. The

idea of impossibility paralyzes one's energies; yet on the other hand, the belief that a thing is possible is not an adequate incentive to do it. I may believe that I can walk out a certain distance, yet this will not lead me to do it. I must have other reasons for going, and going in this particular way, and not by railway or street car. Hence, Professor Finney and others are surely wrong in insisting on the possibility of a sinner's truly repenting and exercising faith in Christ without the aid of divine grace, as the indispensable condition of exercising faith and repentance. To convince a sinner that he is able to repent of his sins would not lead him to do so, even if it were true. Other and different reasons are needed, e. g., a true sense and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ. So that even in this matter possibility belongs to a subordinate category. I never met a sincere Christian who told me that he was led to repentance by the belief that he was able to exercise it. While a belief that it is not possible to do a thing will prevent his attempting it, yet a belief that he is able to do it will not lead him to undertake it without other reasons.

There was sometime ago a popular illustration fitted to show the sinner's ability. The case of a sinner was likened to that of a sailor who had fallen overboard into a stormy sea and to whom his mates threw a rope, by seizing which he was drawn safely on board. The great fallacies lurking in this illustration are easily seen. The sailor

sees and feels that he is in great danger, and is most anxious to be saved from drowning, and that the only way in which he can save his life is by seizing the rope. Not so with the sinner, he does not realize his danger of perishing at all, and he does not believe that there is no salvation for him except through faith in Christ.

In the revival which occurred about the middle of the last century, the sinner's ability was greatly insisted upon. Eminent men, like Jonathan Edwards, thought that the true way to subdue a sinner was to show him that he had ability to believe and obey the Gospel. They insisted that the inability of the sinner is not physical, but merely moral, i. e., he has the faculties needed to exercise faith and repentance; but the grand impediment is in his will. True, but the will is influenced by the emotional nature, the state of the affections. If his affections are opposed to it, he is unable to do it. Hence, Christ is said to make men willing in the day of His power. While a man feels his inability to do a thing he will not try to do it. If he is convinced that he is able to do a thing, that will not lead him to try to do it, if he does not for higher and stronger reasons wish to do it.

I Tim. IV:8: "Godliness is profitable for all things." This may be considered a complex statement, and may be analyzed. 1. It is profitable in relation to this world. 2. In relation to the future world. Each of these might be proved by a series of arguments. In this case the body of the

discourse would be proof, the analysis merely enabling you to prove the statement in detail. The process of division, or analysis, as the case may be, will guide in inventing and arranging arguments, and in securing unity and co-ordination among them. But when the arguments used prove equally all the parts of the complex statement, division or analysis should not be made.

"The Sabbath was made for man" might be treated in the same way. First, prove that the proper observance of it conduces to a man's temporal welfare; second, that it conduces to his spiritual welfare.

In explaining these simple methods we have shown incidentally that they are suited to any discourse, no matter how extensive the text may be. In doing this we have endeavored to remove the objection made to these simple methods, that by the use of them a man may take a trifling topic and make a sermon on it which will have no edifying matter in it. This is simply saying that the method is liable to abuse. This is true of the very best things that we possess. Besides, in all the methods we have given, we have shown how a valuable subject may be discussed or proved.

1. We admit that explanation in extensive quantity, or in comprehensive quantity, does not exhaust logical explanation, as comparison and contrast have not been referred to. The reason for this is that they do not generally furnish simple meth-

ods. But they will be considered under complex methods.

2. Skill in explanation is of great value in enabling a person to conduct the grand outlines of simple Explanatory discourses. But it is of equal value in cases where explanation is used in the subordinate parts or the minute tissue of all discourses, no matter what their structure may be.

3. Although it is necessary to distinguish explanatory from confirmatory methods, yet explanation and confirmation are very closely related rhetorically and sustain one another. We may have to explain proof and to prove explanation. Besides, explanation makes the point at issue clear, and thus facilitates proof; and sometimes it makes proof unnecessary by removing prejudices, and causing truth to shine with its own light. When proof is analytic, explanation is all that is needed. Moreover, proof that is relevant tends to limit and explain. For example, you cannot properly prove that God is merciful, without, by this very process, explaining His mercy. In fine, proof and illustration are often used indifferently for the sake of impression. We may explain what our hearers understand, and prove what they believe, provided that by doing so we can interest them and keep the truth for a considerable time in living contact with their minds, so that they may feel its power. A thorough knowledge of these simple processes is needed to enable one to make a well-constructed discourse. In fact, a discourse cannot originate,

much less advance, without these processes. A public speaker should be as familiar with them as with the grammar of the language that he speaks.

II. COMPLEX METHODS.

These are commonly called textual, but this is misleading. A method which is vitally connected with a text is textual. We have seen that simple methods possess this quality, or shoud possess it. Besides, expository sermons are avowedly textual. A textual sermon, properly so called, is one in which the ideas stated in the text—or as many of them as can be united in one plan, form the Heads; the other ideas, should there be any, being either subordinated or waived. This is what a textual sermon should be. It might thus have strict unity and other rhetorical qualities. But as these limitations, by subordinating or by waiving, are both theoretically and practically ignored, a textual sermon may not possess rhetorical qualities at all. Hence, if their structure is rhetorical, it is merely due to the fact that the text is rhetorical itself.

But a preacher should in any case, impart unity to his discourse. This he can do, generally, if he is allowed to waive ideas in the text that he is not able to incorporate with his plan, and also to subordinate parts of the text to other parts that are more prominent in his plan and purpose.

For the reasons already stated, we decline to use the term textual to designate a particular kind of discourse; but shall call such sermons complex, i. e.

not Simple. This, we admit, is not a proper definition, still it means a great deal to say, after defining simple methods, that these sermons are not simple, —that their outlines are not explanatory alone or confirmatory alone. Another reason for preferring the distinction that we have made is that the old terms, Topical, Textual, and Expository are not coordinate, and they are based on the matter; whereas, simple and complex refer merely to the form of structure which is the only distinction that rhetoric as a formal science can recognize.

Heb. IV:11, "Great encouragement to labor to enter into the test spoken of." 1. The Christian life involves great labor. 2. The rest will more than compensate for it. To secure unity, either the labor or the rest should be analyzed, so that the latter may be seen to compensate for the former. e. g. The labor or unrest of the Christian life include (1) all the internal conflicts with sin which are connected with sanctification; and (2) all the external dangers and trials to which the Christian is exposed. Now, the rest should be shown to compensate for both, as in Heaven the soul will be perfectly holy, it will also be safe and blessed. The Heads must not be discussed as little essays but in relation to each other.

The first head should be analyzed. It thus penetrates deeper than a verbal explanation. It reveals internal conflicts of a moral nature, and external conflicts in a world of sin and sorrow. These are the main elements of the unrest referred to. If you

do not proceed in this way, hearers will be apt to think only of physical rest and worldly sorrow. The analysis is exhaustive. It refers to things both internal and external that produce unrest.

The second head is proved in a corresponding manner. In this correspondence the nature of the remedy is revealed, and also its suitableness. In this way unity is secured. The two parts are dovetailed into one another.

As the first head, i. e., the labor, is analyzed, it would not do to analyze the second head, i. e., the rest. This would compel you to repeat yourself in the second, as the only difference between the two would be the difference between positive and negative, i. e., rest and no rest. Let the second then prove that by God's purpose and grace and by the whole experience of the Christian life holiness must be attained. Give proof that no enemy, whether devil or wicked man, will be admitted into that holy place.

The complex nature of this method is evident, as it includes the two simple methods of explanation and proof. The great difficulty in such cases is to secure unity.

Complex methods should be constructed with supreme reference to persuasion. This general idea will guide in the treatment of very many texts and subjects. In these (a) a duty and motives are both included; or (b) a principle and its workings; or (c) a course of conduct and its consequences; or (d) one thing as the condition of another; or (e) one thing contrasted with another.

The constituent parts of these methods are not likely to overlap one another except in cases of very great blundering. These methods are not all of equal value. They nearly all point to action. We do not think that the methods are exhaustive; perhaps (b) and (c) may be combined as in both there is causal relation. It may, however, be practically of great utility and of extensive application. Whatever the complex form may be, it should be logically discussed according to the logical methods explained in "Simple Methods." We shall give at least one example of each, and explain the principle on which it is formed.

In all these there should be supreme reference to persuasion. Thus there will be a definite object in view from first to last. This will check any inclination to deviate from the direct line. A person who is running a race keeps his eye on the goal. It matters not what attractions there may be on either side, he is not fascinated by them. So the true speaker will not turn aside to gather flowers that do not lie in his path.

This definite aim is a thing that often enables illiterate persons who are in dead earnest to speak with power and effect. It is the want of a noble and earnest purpose that often enfeebles educated men and makes them poor preachers. Surely if a man understands at the outset that his discourse must be practical and persuasive this will stimulate him. Without this fervid impulse he can never be an effective speaker. How can a man expect to per-

suade others if he is not in earnest and persuaded himself?

(a) Duty and Motives.

These must always go together if the aim of the discourse is practical. This distinction will guide in dealing with many subjects of a practical nature. But it is not well to use always the phrase "duty and motives," it seems to give too great sameness to discourse. But the thing signified will guide you. When duty is presented it must be accompanied by incentives to discharge it.

Examples: (a) Job XLII:7-10, "The duty of intercessory prayer."

1. The duty is stated here expressly, and is inculcated by the Lord and His Apostles. Examples—The friend who sought bread at midnight for his friend; those who brought the paralytic to Christ. Indeed, in our Lord's prayer we are reminded to include others in our petitions. Paul constantly prayed for his converts and also sought an interest in their prayers. The Apostle James says: "Pray for one another." Examples naturally come next. This order is interesting and should be observed.

2. Motives—Notice the immense advantage, (1) to those prayed for and to the church. Ex.: Moses' prayers, Exodus XXXII:30, 32; XXXIII:12-15. To individuals—Job's friends pardoned. (2) To persons offering up such prayers: Job's afflictions redressed; besides its good tendency on the minds of those who intercede for others.

This method may seem rather too heavy. But it is not so, as there is consecutive thought. There are also movement and vivacity, history and biography. Besides, there is no need to express the numerals here indicated for your convenience, or to make the transitions very emphatic in delivery. The discourse should not be equally divided between duty and motives, as this would impair unity and make the sermon weak in the middle. The one should be made prominent. The question is whether it best suits your purpose to discuss the duty mainly, or the motives mainly.

Jer. XIV:7-9, 20, 21. The prophet's prayer and the grounds on which he expected a favorable answer to it.

I. Prayer, "Do not leave us." The people felt their need of mercy—their need of the quickening of the Spirit, and of the gracious presence of God.

II. Grounds on which he pleaded for a favorable answer. (1) Their contrition of heart on account of their sin, and their full confession of sin. (2) Reasons found in the divine perfections. (a) Ability to save. (b) The relation in which God stood to His people—the hope of Israel and their Saviour in time of trouble.

(b) A Principle and Its Workings.

I Tim. 1:15, last clause. "The influence which the Apostle's deep and abiding sense of unworthiness exerted on his whole life after his conversion."

I. Account for his deep and abiding sense of personal unworthiness. (1) Sense of unworthiness accounted for by the manner of his conversion. (2) Its continuance accounted for.

II. Show the influence this has on the whole of his subsequent life as an apostle. Its influence is explained as producing love to Christ, desire to convert sinners to Christ, desire to cleave to Christ for his personal salvation.

It is easy to see the vital connection between these two heads; and the correspondence between them. The analysis of the second is by an essential attribute of causation, or causal analysis. This gives as its results causal parts, i. e., effects of the concept viewed as a cause. The rule is that "none but co-ordinate effects, and all of them be distinguished." If the discussion in causal analysis is confined to the orderly statement of causal parts, the method is "simple."

You can see why causal analysis was not considered in simple methods of analysis. Were the causal parts, i. e. effects of the concept viewed as a cause, alone stated in an orderly manner, the method would be simple, i. e. were we to leave out the first head the method would be simple. Causal analysis reveals the manner in which biographical subjects should be discussed. In such subjects there is the working of a principle or cause, and they are presented in the form of narrative, i. e., in the relations of time. These themes are not concepts nor are they abstracts; they are not the product of thought,

but they are concrete, whether sensible or spiritual, for they are pictured in the imagination.

This is illustrated by history. 1. There are mere annals. 2. There are changes in the people as a whole, the salient points being seized, as is done by Hume and Green. 3. There is what is called the philosophy of history—presenting the workng of principles underlying the changes and accounting for them. Macaulay aims at this and would have achieved greater success had he commenced his history at an earlier period.

Biographical themes come under the head of narration and are discussed by causal analysis. They come under narrative which is a kind of explanation, as something becoming or changing. The theme is not the logical product of thought like concepts and abstracts which we have hitherto considered. It consists of what is outward and sensible, or of what is abstract or spiritual—conversion, the working of pride, formation of character. Thus the subject of narration is different from the subject of division or analysis. For example, if you notice any great change in a man's character or any peculiar and valuable feature, and present it clearly, and trace it to the working of some principle as its cause and make a practical application of the whole, the discourse will be interesting and edifying.

The life of Moses furnishes a fine example of meekness. Numbers XII:3. Whether it ever failed

may be disputed. Chap. XI:10-15; XX:11-12, may refer rather to the failure of faith, or to fear.

I. His meekness was subjected to the severest tests, in view (a) of his exalted position, (b) the abundant revelations with which he was favored, (c) the refractoriness of his people, and (d) the envy of Aaron and Miriam.

II. His meekness must be traced to deep and fervent piety, by which he was distinguished. No other adequate cause can be assigned for it. Application.—Notice the practical utility of his example to us in times of trial, provocation, or difficulty. The first head is explained according to an attribute of relation; the second may be discussed according to an attribute of causation; and the application may be explained by an attribute of relation. Notice how the meekness of Moses furnishes an exemplification of this quality.

Exemplification is a process of explaining which exhibits the theme through its specific parts. Of course, the theme must be a class or generic form of thought. It is closely related to division. In division you view the whole through its specific parts. In exemplification you look at the whole from a part. Thus you have the class "meek," and you view meekness as exhibited in Moses, who belonged to this class and was an eminent example of it. As the whole class is bound together by this common attribute, every individual must possess it. The example selected must be one best suited to the purpose of your discussion. There must be strict

unity in the process of explanation, e. g. When presenting Moses as an example of meekness, you have no right to speak of his fortitude, or disinterestedness, although he possessed these in high degree, but they do not belong to the class.

It is allowable to present several examples in a discourse without impairing unity, provided they be examples of the same quality, that they be used only in reference to it, and that they be kept distinct. In this case the method of division is to be respected. In exemplification you must respect not only the end in view and the nature of the subject, but also your own resources, and the character and knowledge of your hearers. This seems to be the only manner in which a man's character can be the subject of a rhetorical discourse. You can use it as the exemplification of some important quality, or of the working of some principle; in either case it is not the man that is the true subject, but it is the quality or principle.

It is a mistake to suppose that by relating the life of Paul, your hearers will be led to imitate him. This is a purely superficial process and can lead only to unsuccessful effort. But if you can produce in the minds of your hearers, by the force of truth, the deep conviction which characterized Paul, and his fervent zeal, piety and benevolence, and, above all, his love to Christ, you will do what you can to make them truly like him. If you can lodge Paul's principles and sentiments in their minds and stimulate them to action, you may make them like him

—not a caricature of him, which may be all that is gained by those who insist that to be like him we must walk in his steps. We must endeavor to reach the springs of action in Paul's mind. It is this that makes the subject valuable, instructive and inspiring. It is vain to imitate his noble and self-denying life if we have not in our hearts the principles which moulded his character and stimulated and directed his labors for the good of souls and the glory of Christ.

The introduction of biographical subjects imparts pleasing variety to a minister's sermons. They are of great use in dealing with religious experiences. The study of these enlarges our views of the inner life of the Christian. But you must penetrate deep enough to reach the springs of action. If you cannot do this you cannot become a trusted spiritual adviser. If there be a paroxysm of excitement, you should be able to ascertain whether this is due to the working of a spiritual principle or to pictures formed in the imagination, or merely to sympathy with other minds.

I would treat Old Testament history in the same way. The principle underlying it all is the gradual unfolding of redemption. This is the vital principle that constantly affects its history. This accounts for God's choice of the Israelites to be his peculiar people, and all his dealings with them. In discussing the life of Abraham I would not bestow the main attention on the manner in which he acted, but on God's choice of him and God's treatment of

him, whether he acted well or ill, and specially on the covenant which God made with him and under which we now live.

It may be said that a man's character may be described. True, but Description has always for its theme an object existing in space, an integrate whole, conceived of, or pictured in the mind as such. Hence, in description, being presented in the relations of space, and merely as existing, there is no movement; unlike a theme in narrative which is becoming or changing in time, it is fixed in space. Hence, it is suited to the natural sciences and to poetry, but not to oratory. The orator in describing loses sight of his hearers, and lavishes all his power and affection on his own ideal. It is suited to what Aristotle calls "epideictic" and Cicero calls "demonstrative" discourse. It is fitted to amuse or please, but not to persuade. Description is not suited to the abstract themes that the preacher has to discuss. The forming of an adequate mental picture of such is impossible. Who can form a mental picture of law, of truth, of right, of government, of learning, etc.?

Sensational preachers find description useful. By thus presenting scenes attractive or terrible, they excite passions directly and suddenly. We shall see in due time, however, that it is impossible in this way to excite religious affection.

This is suited also to those who aim at a pictorial style of speaking. This must necessarily be superficial, as the great themes in the Gospel, can-

not, in this way, be presented. The fancy or imagination is thus addressed. There is no true eloquence in it. To be truly eloquent you must touch the deep springs of moral action in the heart. There is no levity in true eloquence; the orator is a most serious man, influenced by high moral purpose. There is no edification in description, although people may for awhile be amused and attracted by it. In the course of time they will find that they are starved. You present the main outlines of an object, you fill up the picture, you paint or embellish it, you seek to bring it up to your beautiful or grand ideal. What becomes of the hearers in this case? They are converted into spectators of your artistic skill. There is no movement.

Novel writers often indulge in description. They may properly do so, as their work is not to persuade but to amuse their readers, to please their taste, or to exhibit the author's powers. But a true orator can impart vivacity to his speech without this mechanical process.

(c) A COURSE OF CONDUCT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

Romans VIII:13. "Christians should live after the Spirit and mortify the deeds of the body." I. Exhortation to mortify the deeds of the body through the Spirit. Explain this. II. Consequences: (1) To live after the flesh is a state of spiritual death. (2) To live after the spirit and mortify the deeds of the body is to live, to enjoy spiritual life that will never end. The course of conduct should be

explained. It is not to mortify the deeds of the body, but to mortify the deeds of the body through the spirit, i. e., in reliance on divine grace. This, of course, implies the belief of the truth and faith in the grace of God.

It may be said that the consequences may, in this case, be presented merely as motives. True; but it is not wise always to present things as duties and motives, as it produces too great sameness. Besides, there is something peculiar here, which makes it differ from ordinary motives. There is evidently an element of causation at work. In the one case there is a principle of corruption doing its deadly work, and in the other case there is the working of a principle of grace in the heart. This is a sufficient reason why a "course of conduct in its consequences" should be distinguished from "duty and motives." And the making of this distinction will lead one to penetrate more deeply into a subject, which will be a very great gain to himself and his hearers.

(d) ONE THING AS THE CONDITION OF ANOTHER.

Acts 11:42-47. "The spiritual prosperity of the church is the condition of its influence for good, and of its own stability."

I. Elements of the Church's spiritual prosperity are: (1) Cordial belief of the truth; (2) union in Christian love and benevolence; (3) diligent use of the means of grace and patient continuance in well-doing.

II. The conditions for good and of its own stability are: (1) They commend the Gospel and make the church attractive. (2) They render the Church steadfast by confirming the faith and comforting the hearts of believers. In the first head there is analysis; in the second there is proof.

The nature of the spiritual prosperity of the Church should be explained, as it is not generally understood. Many consider that it consists in having many wealthy and influential persons in the church; in having a splendid edifice luxuriantly fitted up and adorned; in having great crowds collected and much excitement, although spasmodic; in having large accessions to the communion roll, and large contributions to the church's finances. The state of the church immediately after Pentecost will correct this misapprehension. Its real prosperity is made manifest. It is attractive and assimilating and conducive to steadfastness.

(e) ONE THING CONTRASTED WITH ANOTHER.

Here we have to do with a logical product of thought—with a class. Things compared or contrasted must belong to the same class, species of the same genus. When resemblance between species of the same class are indicated it is called *Comparison;* when differences are pointed out it is called *Contrast;* and when the resemblance is not between species, as in the former cases, but between their relations, it is called *Analogy.*

Luke V:33-39. "Our Lord's method of reform-

ing men illustrated by contrast with that of the Pharisees." I. The Lord dealt with the understanding and the conscience; they dealt with deportment and the performance of external religious rites. II. The Lord's reformation was universal and progressive; theirs was partial and complete at once.

You can easily see that in this way of contrasting, the division runs from top to bottom. This is conducive to unity. Persons generally divide the matter across. This impairs unity, leads to repetition, or what is equivalent to repetition.

When comparison or contrast furnishes the principle of division it is not well to divide the discourse in the middle, presenting first the object itself and then that which is contrasted with it—as (1) the Lord's method of reformation; (2) that of the Pharisees. This tends to impair unity and enfeeble the sermon in the middle and also to make the second head merely a converse repetition of the first. It is better to state together the points contrasted, so that the contrast may run through the whole length of the sermon. There are the same objections to stating, 1st, what a thing is; 2nd, what it is not. Besides such a principle of division might lead to extraordinary results. What is really meant is: what a thing is frequently mistaken for, and what it truly is. Show what a thing truly is in your discussion and correct misapprehensions as you advance.

Another example of contrast is furnished by the

Pharisee and publican who went up into the temple to pray. Luke XVIII:10. The two belonged to the same class. They were worshipers. I. Contrast the deep humility of the publican with the hypocrisy, uncharitableness and self-complacency of the Pharisee. II. Contrast the publican's exalted idea of God's mercy, and his trust in it, with the absence of all sense of the need of this mercy in the Pharisee.

We strongly recommend presenting the points of contrast simultaneously. We would, in general, take the side which we believe to be right for the subject; and, in stating consecutively contrasted points, we would present the other side as an offset to each of the points respectively. This would secure unity and vivacity. After dealing with the contrast you might, if you please, present motives.

Mark I:17 furnishes an example of analogy. Apostles or Gospel preachers did not act like fishermen; they had no nets. Yet as fishermen catch fish in their nets and bring them to land, and thus make great gain, so the Apostles by preaching the Gospel would bring persons into the Kingdom of Christ.—This is explanation by analogy. The important thing in such explanation is to seize only the higher analogies, and those best suited to your subject. It would not be fair to say in this case that it is lawful to use pious frauds to induce persons to become Christians, as fishermen conceal a hook in the bait to deceive the fish.

The main points are plainly: I. Earnest per-

severance in the work of preaching, and great skill in adapting truth to the hearers' minds. II. The great reward—not worldly gain, but the saving of immortal souls to the glory of Christ, who sent them forth.

FIGURATIVE TEXTS AND EXPOSITORY SERMONS

CHAPTER IX

FIGURATIVE TEXTS AND EXPOSITORY SERMONS

Notes on Figurative Texts.

We have now stated and explained principles which underlie the classification of methods as simple and complex. The person who masters these methods and acquires skill and facility in the use of them will have no difficulty in dealing with any subject that he is competent to discuss. Of course, we can have no more methods at present. But before proceeding further we wish to indicate the manner in which two particular kinds of texts should be treated. Their importance demands this. What we have now to deal with is not methods; so we present no new methods.

The one class is composed of FIGURATIVE TEXTS. These are very numerous. They furnish pleasing variety in preaching, and the proper treatment of them is conducive to vivacity and beauty. When you find the subject which the figurative text contains, you can treat the subject either in a Simple or a Complex method. The only difficulty is in preserving the interest and beauty of the figure in

connection with the discussion of the subject, in which all the edification is found.

Two extremes are to be avoided. The one is presenting the moral in an abstract form, and dismissing all allusion to the figure; the other is allegorizing and dividing the figure, and seeking fanciful analogies. In the one case, no advantage is taken of the figure, and hearers are disappointed; in the other, the whole sermon becomes a play of fancy, often offending good taste, and sometimes making the whole performance ridiculous. A middle course is to make the moral the true basis of discourse, and to adopt a form which will preserve the spirit of the figure. It is not necessary, in an abstract manner, to discuss the truth that the Christian life demands very great effort; nor, on the other hand, to illustrate it by reference to military tactics.

Luke XIII:6-9. It would be frigid and unrhetorical in this case to say: "The subject here is our accountability for the improvement of our privileges," and then to discuss the subject as if there were no reference to horticulture at all. This would disappoint or offend any audience, and rightly so.

The proper subject is, "Religious privileges must be improved, fruits corresponding to them must be produced or the consequences must be fatal."

God expects fruit; the very delay in cutting down the tree is with the view of using means to produce fruit. II. The unfruitful tree will be cut

down, not only as useless, but also as injurious. We have thus a course of conduct and its consequences.

I Timothy VI:12. I. The nature of the spiritual conflict, and the great Ally on whose guidance and help we may depend. II. The glorious reward of victory, and eternal disgrace and misery of defeat.

We have endeavored to preserve the force of the figure as much as possible without allegorizing it. The example here is not properly a case of comparison or contrast, but of analogy. As the soldier fights with lethal weapons to conquer a country, so the Christian contends against temptation and sin that he may lay hold of eternal life. The cases are merely analogous. There is not a comparison of things, but of relations. To speak here of military strategy, of the field of battle, of the laws of warfare is out of the question. The higher analogies alone should be indicated. But there is one thing we cannot leave out of view, which is, that there is the Captain of our salvation, our Almighty Ally, without whose guidance and help we cannot obtain the victory and the heavenly prize. If we are to fight the good fight of faith and gain the immortal crown it must be Christo duce, auspicio Christi.

How spirited a discourse of this kind may become it is easy to see; what zeal and courage it is fitted to inspire! Many figurative texts are of great value if they are treated aright. Skill in this should be acquired.

The beautiful figure in Hosea XIV:4-7 is plainly

intended to show that the effectual cause of the Church's prosperity is the grace of God. It will have as beneficial an effect as dew has on vegetation. Dew signifies instruction or enlightenment. Deut. XXXII:2-4. It also represents quickening influences. Is. XXVI:19. The effects of this are (a) the Church will grow; (b) it will become steadfast; (c) it will be beautiful and attractive. This prosperity will belong not only to the people of God in their collective capacity, but also to individuals. We thus set forth a precious doctrine, and also preserve the charm of the figure. The doctrine is not obscured by this, but illumined and beautified.

It is much to be regretted that in this regard commentaries, instead of helping, lead astray. The allegorizing tendency introduced by Origen is perpetuated in some of the large commentaries to this day.

Rules for dealing with figurative texts: (a) Strive to understand the subject lying under the figure, and the particular point that the figure is intended to illustrate, and use it only in this aspect. (b) Deal only with higher analogies which are intended to present the subject clearly, and introduce no analogy, however beautiful, that will destroy the unity of the subject.

Suggestions to aid in securing unity in complex methods. 1. Make either duty or motives the more prominent. 2. Discuss the heads in the same line. 3. See that one tone or spirit pervades the whole.

Notes on Expository Sermons.

A sermon of this kind is in Scotland called a lecture. It was customary to give what was called a lecture in the forenoon, and a sermon in the afternoon. Dr. J. W. Alexander lamented that this good usage had been given up in America; and that books on homiletics ignore this kind of discourse. Thus people do not receive the instruction in the Word of God that is needed for their edification; and the Scriptures are discussed in a fragmentary manner, which does not do them justice. However, the designation of this kind of discourse is misleading, as it fails to indicate that it should be a sermon or rhetorical discourse, and also to distinguish it from other sermons. Originally, it was a kind of paraphrase and commentary combined, without unity, method or specific aim, although practical remarks were interspersed or added. What I mean by an expository sermon is one that is as strictly exegetical as is compatible with rhetorical qualities, and that finds not only its leading idea, but its whole matter in the text, which, on this account, generally embraces an extended passage of Scripture. Sometimes when there was unity in the text a very good rhetorical discourse was made. Men of good ability endeavored to grasp, explain and apply the leading idea in an extended passage. But these cases were exceptional —few and far between.

A good many years ago Presbyterian churches in New York became greatly interested in expository

preaching, influenced by Dr. C. Hodge's writings in the Princeton Review. People felt that the sermons to which they had been accustomed were unedifying, as they contained very little Scripture truth. Hence there was a powerful reaction in favor of expository preaching.

I. Expository sermons must have method, like all other popular discourses. If the expository discourse has not a definite subject and aim, symmetrical structure and natural and graceful movement, it is not a sermon at all; hence, it belongs not to homiletics at all, but to what is called exegetical theology. In its structure it must be either simple or complex. Hence it does not introduce a third method. There is therefore no need now to give examples of these methods, as they have been adequately presented and explained.

Its method must be either simple or complex. The Simple Explanatory on Mark VIII:1-21; the Confirmatory on Luke XIV: 15-24, and on Romans VII:7-13; and the Complex on Job XLII:7-10, and on Acts II:42-47, are suitable outlines for expository sermons. I maintain that they must have organic structure and development and definite practical aim, like other sermons.

II. The great difficulty is to secure unity of subject. If this is done, all other rhetorical qualities can be easily secured, as unity is an essential attribute of rhetorical discourse. This can be attained:

(a) By selecting a text that has unity in itself. This is easily done when you are dealing with miscellaneous texts. When preaching on a book or epistle, select such an amount of text as is needed to furnish a definite subject.

(b) By seizing a leading idea and subordinating all others to it. If you have formed the true idea of the text all the others will naturally take subordinate positions and become subsidiary. But even if this cannot be done without making the subject too general you can easily waive, for the time, what you cannot incorporate, what cannot be made to fall in with your plan. If this is done in a proper manner it will not seem at all disrespectful to the text. We need not wonder that this kind of discourse is most interesting. It secures continuity of thought; it brings out the spirit of the passage, as modified by its occasion, environments and practical aid and tendency.

III. Another difficulty is to know what points to make prominent by explanation. If you explain everything the discourse will be purely didactic, and it will weary the hearers, leaving nothing to their judgment or imagination to supply. If you explain everything equally, the discourse will have no salient points and no movement. It is a pity to increase these difficulties by loading your sermon with parallel passages or with conflicting opinions of commentators. If you can explain a real difficulty, do so; if not, pass on to what you can ex-

plain, giving the results of your exegetical research, not the process.

When expounding an extended text, it is not desirable to quote parallel passages unless needed for proof. In such a passage there is generally a large body of Scripture truth; hence there is less need of additional Scriptural texts.

It is needless to quote the opinions of commentators, and to name them. The tendency of this is to exhaust the patience of any audience. Besides, mentioning names has an arrestive tendency. It is said of the late celebrated Dr. Brown of Edinburgh, a confirmed exegete, that in explaining what he considered a difficult passage he actually gave the conflicting opinions of the commentators, and did not mention his own. Thus he left the hearers to decide what he could not decide himself.

IV. While, as already explained, there must be method in expository sermons, yet the method should not be emphatically enunciated and repeated. Exposition should seem to take the lead, while method furnishes other rhetorical qualities. In an elegant frame house it is not necessary to make the posts, sleepers and the joists appear. They must, however, be there, as without these the building could not be erected or made to stand.

V. Expository preaching was common in Old Testament times. II Chron. XVII :7-9; Nehem. VIII :8. It was practiced by the Apostles. Justin (A. D. 150) tells us that it was customary in all the public services of the Christians. It was the

method of Chrysostom and Augustine and was continued until A. D. 1200. Then a more rhetorical style, revealing much ingenuity, and conformed to logical analysis, commenced, and it lasted till the Reformation, when expository preaching was revived. It continued until recently in Presbyterian churches in Scotland. To it were due their extensive knowledge of Scripture, their steadfastness in the faith, and their strong religious sentiments.

VI. Its advantages to the people are manifest. It leads to an extensive knowledge of the Word of God. Whole books of Scripture are expounded. Thus the people are edified. The whole counsel of God is declared. People are deeply interested and they learn to search the Scriptures for themselves. Difficulties are explained, prejudices removed. This is more satisfactory than the fragmentary method in which the Gospel is generally preached. If there are "itching ears" the ministers are themselves to blame. It is the heaping to themselves teachers that does the mischief. Do not blame the people for fickleness. In this they merely follow their ministers.

VII. Its advantages to ministers are equally great. It leads them to study whole books of Scripture. There are many ministers who do not seem able to find anything to preach, in the Bible. It teaches them to use the concrete Scripture methods of presenting truth and to present Scripture truth in the proportion in which it is found in the Bible. It thus secures endless variety, and keeps

ministers from going around a little circle of doctrines that are congenial to their own minds. It also keeps from the habit of preaching continually on certain practical subjects, such as temperance, Romanism, divine decrees, missions, municipal matters, Sabbath observance. It leads them to enforce Scripture truth with divine and spiritual motives, and not with those derived merely from social and domestic life. Thus it teaches how to deal with the conscience. It presents an inexhaustible supply of illustrations derived from nature, indeed as many as they can use. They never will consider the treasure contained in the Bible until they study the whole of it consecutively. It enables them to preach doctrines peculiarly offensive to the carnal mind, and to reprove sins or faults without giving offense, because they are presented in the text and are not specially sought for. It fills their sermons with wholesome doctrine. It gives the minister commanding influence over his people. It enriches all his other sermons and, in course of time, makes him, as he should be, "mighty in the Scriptures."

Excellence in Expository preaching cannot be attained without great and protracted labor. It is much more difficult to make expository sermons than other kinds of sermons. There are all the difficulties connected with ordinary sermons, with the addition of exegesis, and also preaching on texts that are prescribed, and which may be difficult.

Let us hold fast the idea that an expository discourse is a sermon, i. e., a rhetorical discourse. It must have a logical method, and a definite subject. This is due to the Word of God. It is not respectful to the Bible to take detached fragments of it, wrenched from their vital connections, according to the fancy of the preacher.

It is not easy for us to understand how much Presbyterians in Scotland were indebted to their ministers for the remarkable knowledge of Scripture that they possessed. The testimony of Bishop Burnet in reference to this is very valuable. He said: "The deprived ministers had brought the people to such a degree of knowledge that cottagers and servants could have prayed extempore. I have often heard them at it, and though there was a large mixture of odd stuff, yet I was astonished to see how copious and ready they were in it. Their ministers generally brought them about them on the Sunday nights, when the sermons were talked over; and every one, women as well as men, were desired to speak their sense and experience, and by these means they had a comprehension of matters of religion greater than I have seen among people of that sort anywhere. The preachers went all on one tract, of raising observations of points of doctrine out of these texts, and proving them by reasons, and then of applying them, and showing the use that was made of such a point of doctrine, both for instruction and terror, for exhortation and comfort; for trial of themselves upon it, and for fur-

nishing them with proper direction and helps; and this was so methodical that the people grew to follow a sermon quite through, every branch of it. To this some added the resolving of doubts concerning the state they were in, and their progress and decay in it, which they called cases of conscience." Edinburgh Review, Oct. 1900, Page 493.

Men and women thus trained in a country that was plundered and starving not only held fast their faith, but were ready to go to prison and to death.

It may be asked how is a knowledge of these principles of explanation and proof to help us to make a discourse? It may as well be asked how is a knowledge of grammar to enable us to speak correctly? Shall we think of grammar all the time we are writing? Surely not; but we should write as correctly as we can, and use our grammatical knowledge to enable us to correct what we have written. So with rhetorical principles. The educational value of these principles is very great. A knowledge of them will produce in your minds an irrepressible aversion to all confusion and want of sequence in harmony and thought. This, which is a kind of instinct in a cultivated mind, will be a great help. Then consider what your subject should be. Make a sketch of the best method to discuss it. Sketch a plan, see that explanation is on one principle; see that the parts are in one line; that they do not overlap one another; that there be no superfluous parts, and no parts lacking. Thus your subject will be easily understood and

grasped by the mind. It will also become symmetrical, beautiful and impressive.

Let us take a case in which one happens to find something that makes an impression on his mind, more or less definite, say in Heb. VII :25. At first do not think of anything but the text and what use you wish to make of it. Exegesis: What is meant by the phrase, "to the uttermost"? Does it refer to the greatest sinners, or the complete salvation of believers in Christ? Christ's ability to save is evidently the grand idea. The greatness of the salvation is another prominent thought. We must make the most of these two things.

What shall we put first? Evidently the nature of the salvation, as the knowledge of this will enable us to see the ability of the Great High Priest to affect it. Besides, proofs of Christ's ability will be more suitable to finish with, as the Apostle wishes to produce faith in this very thing. 1. What is needed to complete the believer's salvation. 2. Christ's ability to do this for him, and this with the practical view of increasing his faith and assuring him of eternal salvation. Nothing can be simpler than this.

1. We shall have to make an analysis of what is needed to complete the salvation: 1st. Mercy to pardon while days of weakness and trial last, without which there can be no spiritual life or fellowship with God. 2nd. Grace to enable us to maintain such a life—to produce painful sensitiveness

to the presence of sin in our hearts; and to impart spiritual comfort, joy and hope.

2. Proof that Christ is able to do all this: He ever liveth to make intercession for us; He has all power for this very purpose; His intercession is based on His atonement, and is of equal efficacy; the glory of Christ's person and character. We should realize how much is still to be done; we should feel need of effort on our part; we may rely on Christ, who is the Great and Ever-living High Priest.

The method is complex. One head is explanatory and is analyzed; the other is confirmatory and it is proved. Unity pervades the discourse. This indicates the difference between the simple and complex method and makes the transition from the one to the other plain and easy.

The method is practical. Each head is fitted to lead to the exercise of faith in Christ to save, or to the increase of faith in Him. The one head shows how precious the salvation is; the other assures you that Christ is able and willing to effect it.

Do not put this question: "What method shall I adopt?" First consider what matter you have to deal with and what practical purpose it will serve. Then you will suit best your aim, your ability and resources.

RHETORICAL DEVELOPMENT-MOVEMENT

CHAPTER X

RHETORICAL DEVELOPMENT

I. Movement

It is assumed that the affections lie between the understanding and the will; hence, if you wish to persuade you must excite. Unless discourse is sensational, you must apply the truth which has persuasive power to the understanding by explanation and proof.

1. This is specially with a view to excitation and persuasion. These must always go together in all practical and specially religious discourses. To excite without persuading serves no practical purpose. It may be pleasurable or the opposite, but it can serve no moral purpose. A great many have a craving for excitement for its own sake. If they cannot get it in church they must go elsewhere for it. Excitation is good when it is of a truly religious nature, when it consists of intense hatred of sin and error, and love of truth and righteousness, and especially, of God. There can be no excess or extravagance in such feelings. Their tendency is to purify the heart, and to elevate and ennoble the character. Our aim should be to change the disposition, to convert; or to improve the disposition, to sanctify, which is a continuous process.

2. The process of excitation has been partially explained. We have seen how by explanation and proofs, a practical subject which has persuasive power in it, may be presented and applied to the understanding and kept in living contact with it. Surely this process must excite a certain amount of interest and feeling. The point now to be considered is how greater intensity of feeling is to be produced. The feeling may not be strong enough or deep enough to serve your purpose. Many are almost persuaded to be Christians, almost persuaded to choose the good part, almost persuaded to forsake sin and do the will of God. Thus we only almost gain our purpose in preaching. This is unsatisfactory. We must do more if we can. What is wanted is to produce greater depths of conviction, greater intensity of feeling.

3. The question is, how are we to effect this? Must we depart from our subject and bring in some new thing to produce greater intensity of feeling? Why not take this new thing for our subject? Our labor in inventing and discussing our subject, in this case, is lost. If the will can be directly influenced why have a subject at all? Why not address the will directly by exhortation? But we cannot do this. No man can influence his own will directly. How then can he influence the will of others? If he could he would, as Kant says, move men like machines and deprive them of their liberty, which we are bound to respect. We must move them in such a way as to enjoy their intelligent approval under our process of excitation. The peculiarity

referred to consists in *Rhetorical Movement* and *Adaptation*. We need not depart from the process hitherto followed. We have hitherto presented and applied truth to the understanding of our hearers. It is only in this way moral and religious feelings can be excited. They must be excited from within; by the friction of moral and religious ideas in the mind.

This is opposed to the teaching and practice of the Ancients. Aristotle inculcates a clear and logical presentation of the subject. If this is not sufficient to influence the judges he says that you must address their passions. He gives rules for exciting any feeling which may best serve your purpose, that of patriotism, envy, revenge or any other. Eloquent French preachers of the last century said that they presented arguments and then addressed the passions. This is following Aristotle.

Whately seems to me to make a great mistake when he says: "We must trust more to an indirect thrust when appealing to feelings, otherwise, our hearers, being on their guard, will parry the blow." We should take no such advantage of our hearers. We do not need to do so, as we purpose to excite feelings through the understanding. We should be quite willing to tell them at the outset what feeling we wish to excite in their hearts, assured that we shall be sustained by their understanding. This would not be wise, however, as it would merely anticipate the interest of the sermon.

4. We rely on movement and adaptation; but

remember that it is the movement resulting from the discussion of the identical subject that we have invented, and it is the adaptation of the same subject to our hearers.

I. Rhetorical Movement.

The design of movement is to bring the subject, with which you seek to persuade, into contact with the whole mind, the understanding, affections and will. This must always be done in the order now stated. It consists of the arrangement of parts reached by explanation, and of arguments, so that they shall follow one another in natural order or shall increase in strength as they advance; and also of the arrangement of the whole matter of discourse so that the movement shall be from general to specific, from abstract to concrete, or from objective to subjective. It is intended to awaken a deeper interest in your hearers' minds and also to lead them to think on the subject, and thus to keep it in contact with the mind long enough to produce the impression it is entitled to produce, and which you desire to produce. Thus the interest will increase to the very end till the climax is reached.

5. We do not require to present methods illustrative of this. At the very commencement we stated that we would use the same methods or plans throughout. Thus in inventing subjects we furnish plans merely to present the subjects invented. When we came to methods we referred to those formerly given, confining attention entirely to methods.

Now, in illustrating movement, we refer to that in the methods which was not referred to previously, but which was latent in the method. Thus new examples are now needed.

Movement must pervade the whole sermon from beginning to end; but it will be naturally more accelerated and marked as it advances. Examples: I Kings XIX:12, II Cor. V:10, Romans VII:7, Heb. IV :11, Jer. II :1-3, Luke XI :13.

So far as explanation is concerned, this has been illustrated in all the examples of methods already given. Thus in indicating the character of those to whom the judgment is properly alarming, the movement is from practising sin to self-deception. In considering the states of mind in which remembering Christ's words is beneficial, the movement is from partial insensibility to distress of conscience. In indicating the inability of the law to destroy sin in the soul, the movement is from revealing sin to sinking the sinner in distress of conscience or despair. The labor of the Christian life moves on to eternal rest. There is movement from duty to motive, from conflict to victory. There is a natural order in explaining before proving, or before setting forth the desirableness of a thing or the opposite. Let us never forget Cicero's dictum, "Omnia festinent ad eventum."

Movement not only awakens, but increases interest and affection; if the movement is gradual, and if nothing is permitted to arrest it, there is growing intensity of feeling. An audience, when a discourse

is valuable and moves on in this manner, never grows weary, nor is it even conscious of the lapse of time. You may preach as long as you like. Hence mistakes in regard to this are not only seen by the intelligent, but they are felt by all. This is, therefore, a matter in which mistakes are not to be tolerated. If a discourse cannot be made to move in a natural manner it will be found that this is due to something fundamentally wrong in the subject, or in the structure of the sermon. Many seek unconsciously to compensate for this defect by emphatic and exaggerated statements, by loud speaking and by excessive gesticulation. But this only makes the fault more glaring and displeasing to intelligent hearers.

6. So far as the arrangement of arguments to secure movement is concerned, it has been illustrated in simple confirmatory methods already stated. But this is clearly the proper place to consider the relation in which arguments stand to one another,—and this due to their nature. The remark of Whately is worthy of special notice. He says that "It is the only thing that belongs exclusively to rhetoric; and further that it is perhaps not of less consequence in rhetoric than in the military art."

7. The natural order in which proofs should be stated should be understood. That the natural order may be followed, the arguments should be classified. There are two great classes—the *analytic* and the *synthetic*. The analytic have demonstrative certainty, as they are found in the very terms of the

proposition itself. If you explain the terms, their agreement is evident; hence the importance of studying the meaning of a proposition; hence also a clear statement often terminates controversy. Synthetic proofs are divided into Intuitive and Empirical.

(a) Intuition is the mind itself acting according to its constitution. For example: Two straight lines cannot enclose a space; goodness is lovely; man is an accountable creature. There are a great many intuitions in man as a moral and religious creature to which discourse may be directed. "Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Rom. II:15.

(b) Empirical proofs are divided into, *a priori*, *signs* and *examples*.

In *a priori* proof, we reason from a cause to its effect, or from a general law to its result. Supposing a fact admitted, if the proof assigned for it will account for it, it is a priori proof.

For example: When a man is placed on trial for murder, if it is evident that he is avaricious and interested in the death of the person; or if it can be shown that he is jealous or revengeful, these would create a presumption of guilt, provided that facilities such as proximity of time and place and prospect of concealment existed. On the other hand, the absence of these inducements and facilities are a presumption of innocence. The deep and awful necessities of our guilty, sinful and miserable race.

for which the human mind could find no remedy, although seeking in the most favorable circumstances for thousands of years, furnishes a priori proof in favor of a divine revelation, supposing the world to be under the government of a just and merciful God. If there be an adequate cause and certainty of its operation the weight of this kind of proof is very great.

In *signs,* we reason from an effect to its cause, or to the occasion of its operating. Among signs are testimony and authority, the one relating to facts, the other to opinions. Thus we do not suppose that the testimony would have been given had the fact not occurred, or that competent men would have pronounced an opinion without valid reasons. If the testimony be concurrent, when collusion is impossible, it will be much stronger, and, in many cases, will be sufficient proof, although the witnesses, individually, may have the reputation of being liars. The concurrent opinion of able men who have thoroughly examined a matter, is of great value and authority.

Examples are proofs which are founded on the resemblance between individuals of the same class. They have a close affinity to a priori proofs. Both direct the mind to a cause or law, and both rest their validity as proofs on the assumed uniformity of the operations of nature.

8. Although it is not at all likely that all the species of empirical proofs will be used in our discourse, yet it is well to present them in combination

so that their relation to one another may be understood and that it may be seen how these arguments may be assailed and also defended. A statement of this kind may be interesting and may also fix them in the memory.

Subject to be proved: "That the Toronto Bay was frozen over on the night of February 28th, 1890." 1. A priori proof—the temperature that night was 40 degrees below zero. This would imply cold sufficiently intense to freeze the Bay over. There is here the operation of a sufficient cause. 2. Early that night I saw heavily laden teams crossing the Humber a few miles west of the Bay. This is an example of the effectual operation of the cause or law. 3. Signs (a) Authority. The officials of the Observatory declared their opinion that the Bay was frozen over that night. This opinion was professional, given by competent men, placed in the most favorable position to form an opinion. Another sign (b) Testimony. This was given by a number of persons attending different social parties that night at most distant parts of the city, but in view of the Bay, who all declared that they saw that the Bay was frozen over.

METHOD OF REFUTATION.

1. It is admitted that the frost was sufficiently intense to freeze the Bay over; but it is contended that a high wind prevented the operation of the law, i. e. deny the cause or show that something interfered with its action. 2. The example furnished by the freezing of the Humber is easily disposed of, as

it is a narrow stream, sheltered by its wood covered banks, and not exposed to the wind. 3. Signs—As to the opinion of the people at the Observatory, there is no proof that they made any special observation that night, so that their opinion is not of much value, when opposed to the preceding statements. Testimony—Persons going home between one and four a. m. from parties were not competent witnesses. The white foam on the water or "white caps" on a stormy night might be easily mistaken by such persons for ice.

REPLY IN DEFENSE.

1. A priori and example combined. It can be proved that there was nothing to prevent the action of the law referred to. There was no wind such as is alleged, as it is well known that when the cold is 30 or more degrees below zero, no wind has been known to exist even in the Arctic regions, according to Dr. Kane and other explorers. 2. Signs—Although the officials of the Observatory were not aware that any special importance would attach to their observations that night, yet they have self-acting instruments that record the temperature and the direction and velocity of the wind. Hence, their opinion is entirely reliable. As to the witnesses there could be no collusion between them, they were many and they came from different parts of the city. It is a reflection on the character of such persons, and on the ladies present, to say that they were so preoccupied as not to be able to distinguish ice from water. This shows how all these arguments

can be combined, and how they may be made to support one another, and how they can be assailed or defended.

Supposing that proofs of all these kinds are adduced in the same discourse—although very unlikely—the natural order after analytical proof is, 1st, intuitive; 2nd, a priori; 3rd, examples; 4th, signs. The last two may change places, if more suitable to the structure of the discourse. But when there are several arguments of the same kind constituting the body of the discourse, they should increase in strength as they advance. The strongest will thus be the last; and, should they be recapitulated at the conclusion, as is necessary, when they are numerous, they should be recapitulated in the same order. Some recapitulate in a confused manner and others invert the order. Still, strength is in this case a relative term. It is mainly determined by the character of the hearers and by their feelings toward both speaker and subject.

Old divines used to speak of dwelling on an important topic, especially near the end of the sermon. This is what we call amplification. It is sometimes necessary, but it is not well to state your purpose to to do so. It is always assumed that the discourse should move on.

Rhetorical proof is often used in amplification for the sake of impression. Explanation is sometimes used in the same way. If the attention of an audience has to be held on one point for a time, this can only be done by orderly explanation or proof, but

neither should be such as to demand very earnest or protracted thought.

It is not easy to know how many arguments are needed in any case. In logic arguments fitted to convince of the truth presented are all that are required; but in rhetoric they should also produce excitation and persuasion. Excessive refutation of error is apt to produce a reaction in its favor. We are not to suppose that an argument having demonstrative force, although sufficient in logic, is sufficient in rhetoric. Arguments have to be accumulated to suit different, and to influence unwilling minds. Proof is often explanatory; it is also used to refute objections, to strengthen faith, and to produce an impression.

As to the place which the testimony of God should occupy Whately states that as it is the strongest argument it should stand last; but, to manifest as much respect to it as possible, the arguments should be recapitulated in inverted order, so that the testimony of God should occupy the first place. But surely it is not disrespectful to let the testimony of God stand last, the position which the strongest argument is entitled to occupy. Divine testimony is generally the proof, and when other proof is connected with it, it is to remove objections or to help us to realize the truth.

How arguments should be arranged in refutation is a vexed question. It may be well to state reasons in favor of the arrangement of arguments that has been indicated. It is evident that analytical proof should come before signs, etc., as it clears the ground

for the edifice you purpose to erect. It leads to the explanation of terms, defines the *status questionis,* and the point at issue. It thus greatly facilitates discussion. So far as logic is concerned, this proof might in many cases be sufficient; but it is not so rhetorically. In view of diversity of character, prejudices and strong feelings in an audience, a variety of proof is required. A priori proof raises a presumption in favor of the proposition in hand. The arguments for signs strengthen that presumption by showing that the thing that was likely to occur did occur, and the arguments from example strengthen it still further by evidences of similar occurrences. Were *a priori* arguments placed last they might be supposed to be explanatory of a fact already proved, but not proof of it. It is most important to distinguish an example for explanation from an example for proof. The former may be an invented example; in the latter an attribute of causation must be recognized. No one should allow objections to stand together for mutual support; nor is one bound in debate to take up objections in the order in which an opponent places them unless it is in his interest to do so.

It may be asked, why is so much skill needed in preaching the Gospel? Preaching dealing with error is often what is called apologetic. It is well known that an unskillful advocate damages a cause. II Cor. X:4. While it is not wise to give an apologetic tone to preaching, yet it is often proper when setting forth divine truth to refute error opposed to

it. Mr. Romaine, an eminently godly minister of the Church of England, made it a point, it is said, to preach the Gospel and not to refute error opposed to it. There was peace in his day but after his death his congregation was found to be a hotbed of doctrinal error. Then we have to contend with the sinful heart which is deceitful above all things. Skill is needed to produce conviction in an adversary. As we are told that the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, we should seek to acquire skill in the use of this weapon, if we are to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ. It is the only aggressive weapon provided for us.

Movement must not be spasmodic, but continued or sustained through the whole sermon. It is not enough to produce sudden gleams of light, like flashes of lightning, to be succeeded by deeper darkness. The light should resemble that of the dawn, growing steadily brighter unto the perfect day. To be able to impart this movement is a far higher attainment than to excite spasmodic feeling. To secure continued movement the following things are necessary:

1. Positive—(a) The heads must be formed on one principle. That which unites them is the principle that pervales all the parts. This will secure harmony and continuity of feeling and prevent discord by which affections are brought into conflict and destroyed. Many seek to produce movement by mere excitation, by exciting even conflicting feelings. This is the destruction of all proper feeling.

(b) Truths should be grouped in families. They should not, no matter how good they are, be permitted to stray through the sermon. This tends to make a discourse dry, as it disconnects its parts. Good things, presented thus, offend taste. All that belongs to one head should be methodically arranged under it. In doing this, the laws of co-ordination and subordination must be scrupulously observed. Thus the discussion of every successive head brings a decided gain of interest and power.

(c) Great care and skill must be used in making the transition from the discussion of one head to that of another. Oratorical genius is often conspicuous here. M. Coquerel, a distinguished French preacher, declares that skill in making the junctures referred to is the most conscious evidence of a true orator. If this cannot be done it is needless to make the defect conspicuous. A happily chosen word or phrase is often sufficient, or even a fragment of text. But if one cannot make this juncture, he should not make the defect prominent by emphatically announcing the number of the head. The design of this is not to permit the loss of interest or power when passing from one part to another. If this is done in discussing the successive heads, the accumulated interest and power in the whole sermon will be available for persuasion. To neglect to do this would be as foolish as to cut in two an electric wire, and insert between the parts a non-conducting medium.

2. Negative. But even when the plan of the sermon is correct things sometimes creep in that

arrest movement, or, at least, impair its continuity, or cause it to proceed *per saltum*. These things may not be noticed by the speaker, although they diminish the interest and power of the sermon. There are various things that arrest movement.

(a) The minute subdivision of heads. Examples of this are found in great abundance in the sermons of the Puritan divines. Prof. McCulloch found seventy-two subdivisions, in one sermon, under one head. No rhetorical skill could secure continuous movement in such a case. Many of these men seem to have written down their thoughts as they occurred, without any effort to arrange and unite them. The fault in this case is due to the want of severe and protracted study and meditation. If there were earnest and concentrated thought it would produce heat enough to melt these brittle and unconnected ideas, and thus to unite them. Hence, when you hear a truly able speaker you are apt to wonder at the magnitude of his ideas. He takes a firm grasp of his subject. Thus the main ideas alone are distinguished. In this case very few junctures are needed, because there are very few parts. Besides, these comprehensive ideas are closely united to one another. When reading the writings of Luther and Calvin one is astonished at their massive ideas, that are like great boulders fit to be handled only by giants.

When the subdivisions are very numerous preachers often seem to think it necessary to number them. They do this in order to unite them,

when, in point of fact, it separates them. Numbers are so arrestive that they should not be used in quoting passages of Scripture, unless it is absolutely necessary. It is only when texts of vital importance are cited that chapter and verse should be stated. You may assume, in all other cases, that your hearers recognize the quotation, or at least trust your honesty in presenting it. But if you are pleased to indicate chapter and verse, by all means designate them by ordinal, not cardinal, numbers. Do not say Matthew I :7, but Matthew first, seventh. It should be well understood that numbers are always arrestive and chilling. There are certain cumulative adverbs which serve the preacher's purpose much better.

(b) Unnecessary digressions. A short digression, if an increase of power or interest is to be gained by it, is admissible. But if it is to guard against possible mistakes, or to gather flowers that do not lie in your way, or to gratify an unrhetorical propensity, it reveals the want of a high moral purpose. Many digress to prevent the possibility of mistake. They guard and qualify their statements and even correct their language. This is unrhetorical and intolerable. I would prefer slight mistakes to this. Lord Brougham, referring to an eminent lawyer, said: "He would not go one inch out of his way to pluck the most beautiful flower; and he never used one idea as a peg to hang drapery on." When an orator digresses frequently it reveals

the want of a high moral purpose, which must have a chilling effect on an audience.

(c) One-sided development of discourse by which one head is amplified out of due proportion. In this way the balance of the discourse is destroyed. A man stumbles on what he calls a fruitful idea and runs it into the ground. It may be a mere commonplace and may occur in every sermon. Now, if the plan of the discourse is correct at first this must ruin it. There is no apology for this. A person should be able, before he writes a word, to see all the leading ideas in his discourse, and the due proportion that should exist among them. A man who has not this foresight must be rhetorically blind. Care must be taken to avoid this; it can be corrected only by reconstructing the sermon. It can be prevented by keeping in view, from the commencement, the proper proportion in which the various parts of the discourse should be discussed or analyzed.

(d) Repetition. A thing is stated imperfectly and then corrected, or figuratively, and then in plain language, or the point of a figure is indicated, or an illustration is given which itself requires to be explained, thus leaving nothing to the intelligence or the imagination of the hearers. All these arrest progress and weary or offend hearers. A discourse can no more move in this way than a man can proceed on a journey while he walks around in a circle.

(e) Description. This presents its objects in the relation of space, i. e., simply as substance hav-

ing quality, or pictured in the imagination as such. Its subject is not a logical product of thought, i. e., it is neither an abstract nor a concept. It belongs properly to poetry or to natural science, not to oratory. The speaker must be content to present his illustrations in profile, not in statuesque form. As Robert Hall says, "The rapid flashing metaphor is his figure."

Description can have no movement. The orator must not present objects as a painter or sculptor or poet presents them. If he must describe, let him throw his description into the form of narrative. Even when parables or narratives in Holy Writ are referred to they should be merely recalled or suggested by a word, or phrase, but never repeated. What an advantage it is to the preacher to have narratives, illustrations and parables in the Bible with which his hearers are supposed to be familiar! He can suggest a whole parable by a few words. No other orator has such a source of interest or power. Yet people use the phrase, "dull as a sermon." Leave description to poets and sensational preachers who address the imagination, not the conscience.

(f) Wit. "It is the destruction of affection; it is the bent of a mind which, instead of being carried away with the holy and the great, makes it an object of scrutiny, and entertains itself with apparent contradictions and contrasts which are contained in it." (Theremin.) It effectually stops the current of affection, so that after it has been used, excitation has to be begun anew, if indeed it can be re-

sumed at all. Cicero used it freely as a defense against a passion awakened by an opponent. But the confusion of an opponent is purchased too dear by the annihilation of all feeling in an audience.

Wit never can be continuous, even though it is common to speak of flashes of it, using lightning as an illustration. After a person has perpetrated a jest he will find it impossible to speak with seriousness and affection. We must not jest from the pulpit. We are ambassadors of Christ. We should feel the tremendous responsibility resting upon us, if we are indeed called by Christ and put into the ministry. It should never be forgotten that an orator must be a serious man, an earnest man, never prostituting his noble powers or gifts to the amusement of the careless and frivolous. He should realize his responsibility for the right use of the talents entrusted to him. A lady asked me some time ago whether young ministers could be taught to be serious and reverential in the pulpit. She traced irreverence to vulgarity. I suspected, although I did not say so, that it might be traced to something deeper.

(g) Excessive reasoning, being mainly addressed to the understanding, is unfavorable to the growth of affection. Sufficient proof must be adduced, but no more. An orator must not reason to please his own taste or to reveal his power.

The nature and vital importance of movement can be easily seen. If you have a powerful religious truth or principle for your subject, and if it be

adequately explained and proved, and if it be applied to the whole mind by proper arrangement of parts and movement, it must tend to awaken an increasing interest and to lead hearers to meditate on it, and it must excite much affection, and thus influence the will and mold the disposition. Movement is thus indispensable to persuasion. It is also most natural; hence effective speakers who know nothing of its nature, its methods or utility, aim at it, guided by an inward impulse or instinct. There was eloquence before rhetoric, as there was speech before grammar.

We have spent a good deal of time on movement. But although it was not mentioned earlier, yet this must not convey the idea that it is needed only towards the end of the discourse. In point of fact, a discourse must move from beginning to end. It must not stand still for a moment. If the discourse loses movement, you may be sure that you have lost sight of your audience or your subject, or that the subject is not fitted to interest and convince. It is mainly by movement that we can so interest our hearers as to induce them to think the subject with us. It is only thus that it can be lodged in the mind and united firmly with its principles of action. Hence it is easy to see the need of order so clear that it shall not put too great a strain on reasoning powers that are not cultivated by education. If even one momentary good impression can do much good, who can estimate the importance of inducing people with sustained and increasing

interest to attend seriously to saving truth for a considerable time? If a discourse lacks this quality no amount of elocutionary study or skill will enable a person to deliver it properly. Indeed, many get up a kind of physical or nervous excitement to compensate for the want of movement. But after all their misdirected efforts the discourse will move heavily as did the chariots of the Egyptians when their wheels were taken off.

It may be thought that too much importance has been attached to movement. Even if it were so, it should be noticed that the very things that were shown to prevent movement are grave rhetorical faults fitted to render discourse less interesting and impressive than it would otherwise be. One or two of these arrestives would be sufficiently potent to ruin a discourse, even should its subject matter be excellent. Some of these faults are fitted not only to injure one or two sermons, but all the sermons preached in several years, until the obstruction happens to be discovered. Besides, these faults are of such a nature that any one is quite competent to correct them for himself. I do not say that the correction of them will make him an eloquent preacher, because true eloquence depends on special gifts diligently cultivated and also the peculiar resources of the preacher. But although there is no need to aspire to eloquence, much less to popularity, yet we should all strive by divine grace to be edifying, impressive and acceptable ministers of Christ.

RHETORICAL DEVELOPMENT
ADAPTATION

CHAPTER XI

RHETORICAL DEVELOPMENT

II. Adaptation

A. *The relation of adaptation to other parts of discourse* should be understood. Division and Analysis bring out clearly and systematically the persuasive truths in the subject and present them to the understanding. The understanding alone is addressed, yet the persuasive truth cannot fail to produce some impression. When the truth or subject has movement—i. e. Subjective, from understanding to emotion, and from emotion to volition; and Objective, from weaker to stronger proof or statement, the impression is greatly increased. Further, when the truths are brought close to individuals in all their peculiarities of character, states of mind at the time, and environments, the impression is as great as the speaker is competent to make it. This last is what I call Adaptation. It is not something to be aimed at near the end of the sermon. It must be kept steadfastly in view from the beginning. Even in choosing a text and inventing a subject one must aim at adaptation to his hearers whom he desires to persuade.

I. *Adaptation to what is in your hearers' minds constitutionally.*

It is necessary to know this that the idea or theme of the discourse may be directed and attached. We can influence them only by attaching the theme of our discourse to some active principles in their minds. If we cannot do this, persuasion, is out of the question. No matter how powerful may be the truths presented, they will not influence hearers unless they are assimilated with and attached to something in their minds—some active principle.

Aristotle plainly refers to this when he shows that there are three kinds of oratory,—the Judicial, the Deliberative and the Laudatory, or the Panegyric, i. e. the laudatory or epideictic, what Cicero calls the demonstrative, i. e. for display. He believed that people have ideas of justice, of the welfare of the state and of civil merit or honor. A person must have these ideas to qualify him for being a member of civil society at all. Persons who have no apprehension of justice could not have courts in which it is administered. People who have no interest in the public good could not have deliberative assemblies or senates.

Theremin very skilfully rises two degrees above these. He says as a man has a moral nature, he must have moral ideas corresponding to this threefold division. In fact, this is implied in Aristotle's statement—ideas of duty, virtue and happiness. But as man is also a religious creature, he must also have corresponding religious ideas; of obedience to the will of God, of acquiring holiness and thus becoming like God and of blessedness in the

enjoyment of the divine favor. These are general and fundamental principles of action, with one or more of these the preacher is entitled to connect the specific idea of his sermon, and thus to move him from within. This is different from, and indeed directly opposed to, influencing them from without by operating on their desires and fears through their sense of imagination. For the statement of these moral and religious ideas based on Aristotle I am indebted to Theremin.

It is a great matter to know what there is in man to which moral and religious truth may be attached—what is fitted to respond to such truth. This is quite different from presenting a duty and then alarming a man to induce him to discharge it. There is no moral excellence in this. A man's moral and religious nature is not respected. It is not thus God addresses us in His Word.

Adaptation characterized the Lord's discourses, It was foretold that He should know how to "Speak a word in season to him that is weary." This was due to the fact that he knew what was in man, that His knowledge of psychology was such as could belong only to the Creator, to Him who formed the human mind. In conversing with a Samaritan woman or with a Jewish rabbi, or with a rich young man, or with a chief ruler, or with a soldier, He accurately adapted His words to the various individuals addressed. So perfect was the adaptation that His words revealed the true character more correctly than their own statements or questions.

His words were never in vain; they always provoked a response. He infallibly touched the springs of conviction or action, no matter how latent they were. Adaptation was remarkably illustrated in all His teachings. Surely His ambassadors ought to seek to imitate Him in this. It is a rhetorical quality referred to by the Ancients. I think it was Pindar who, when referring to a great orator, said. "His words always left a sting behind them."

"Ideas," according to Theremin, "denote productive thought which impel to production and action; and they are germs of what is to be produced, as well as the rule by which it is to be constructed." These moral and religious principles of action may be presumed to exist in man's nature, which, although morally ruined, is not destroyed. However latent and feeble they may be, they must be addressed, and this will enliven and strengthen them. It is clear that if man's ruin is a moral ruin and if the Gospel is a moral remedy, the feelings which we should seek to excite—and which alone are of any real use—are moral feelings produced by truth in the mind.

Theremin classes moral feelings or affections under the categories already named. I condense his statement. (a) Under the head of duty, or obligation to do the will of God are placed *zeal* for spiritual good, which degenerates when it seeks outward good; *shame* and *repentance* when a person has done wrong or neglected duty; and *anger* towards bad action, which degenerates when it is

directed towards a person. (b) Under the head of virtue or holiness are placed *love* which has God for its highest object, and the good so far as they are like God; *friendship* which is produced by particular moral qualities and desires fellowship with those who possess them; *emulation*, which has for its object excellence in another higher than we possess; and *admiration* which regards that excellence as almost beyond reach. (c) Under the head of happiness or blessedness in the enjoyment of God's favor there are *longing* for the highest good; *hope* to obtain it; *gratitude* to Him who has rendered aid in obtaining it; *pity* for those who do not strive after it, or in a false way; *fear* of all that would deprive us of it; and *abhorrence* of evil within ourselves as the worst enemy to our happiness. Thus there are fourteen pure moral or religious affections available for persuasion. They are the highest and strongest in our nature, and they can be excited by moral and religious ideas presented to the understanding. Among them you will not find any selfish, æsthetic or mercenary feeling. These are all pure affections. They differ from passions mainly in three things: they are voluntary; they are excited by moral truth, and are thus amenable to reason; and they are, or may be, permanent.

A similar distinction between passion and affection is made by President Edwards. He says: "Affection is a word that seems to be something more than passion, being used for all vigorous or lively actings of the will; but passion is used for those

that are more sudden and whose effect on the animal spirits are more violent, the mind being overpowered and less in its own command." He also classifies affections: "From a vigorous, affection and fervent love to God will necessarily arise other religious affections; hence will arise hatred and fear of sin, dread of God's displeasure, gratitude to God for his goodness, complacence and joy in God when He is sensibly present, grief when He is absent, joyful hope when a future enjoyment of God is expected, and fervent zeal for the divine glory. In like manner from fervent love to men will arise all the virtuous affections towards them."

No man, at least in modern times, ever bestowed more labor and nicer discrimination among the affections than he. In this his great strength lay and his power to deal with the conscience. His work on the religious affections will never lose its value to the studious and conscientious minister who has the care of souls. He distinguishes passions from affections. He mentions only religious affections. Love to God, he says, produces hatred and fear of sin; he does not say hatred and fear of suffering or punishment. This last characterizes all mankind, and indeed all sentient creatures; and it cannot be said to flow from love to God. He speaks of dread of God's displeasure; he does not say dread of future misery. All these are powerful religious affections. They give strength, stability and elevation to Christian character.

Without a knowledge of the nature of religious affection, a preacher or spiritual adviser must work

in the dark. He may have some conventional or empirical rules but he has not the spiritual discernment that should be possessed by an educated minister. He cannot tell what kind of excitation his preaching will produce, or whether his spiritual advice will do good or harm. This is surely culpable uncertainty in an educated minister. For example, present vividly a future state of misery as one of excruciating pain and physical torment, and you may excite the passion of fear to such an extent as to produce nervous prostration, despair, or insanity. Explain the same state as one in which the soul is crushed with a load of guilt, retains its sinfulness, and is excluded from the favor of God, and you will excite the affection of fear which is moral, voluntary, and amenable to reason, and thus prepares the soul for the reception of the moral remedy which has been provided. These feelings differ not in degree but in kind. Hatred of physical suffering can never be so intensified as to become hatred of sin, which is an element of holiness.

It may be asked, why not excite both passion and religious affection? They are different in their nature and are excited by different processes. Were religious affection a high degree of passion, one might begin with the passion and end with the affection; but this is impossible. Fear of suffering can never become so intensified as to become fear of sin. The one is not of a moral nature, while the other is an element of true holiness. To make even a good moral man a true Christian he must be re-

generated. The Heaven prepared for God's people is not merely a happy place; but it is a holy place in which "the pious will be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity."

You will, however, have much to do with passion, although you never purposely excite it; and you will have to do with feelings that oppose you, and which you should know how to make subservient to your purpose, or how to destroy. The Gospel often incidentally produces passion instead of affection on account of the sad moral state of the sinful mind. Thus you may even find passion blazing away before you begin to speak. Do not come into collision with it as this will only intensify it. Do not destroy it, lest the subject of it sink into spiritual insensibility. Do not tell the man prostrated with the passion of fear, that his fears are groundless, that the consequences of sin are not dreadful, and that God is merciful. But stimulate his conscience by showing him that it is sin that makes him miserable; and that God acts in conformity with His infinitely holy nature in punishing sin; and, further, that God has provided an atonement for sin, and also the means of sanctifying the soul. Thus, the distracting passion may be converted into a religious affection and the soul converted to God.

To convert a passion into a religious affection, you must strive to awaken the affection that corresponds to the passion by proceeding precisely as you would do if there were no passions present at all, i. e. by applying moral or religious truth to the mind. In Luke XII our Lord's address shows how

the fear of man, that produces hypocrisy, can be suppressed by exciting the fear of God. As if he had said, "if you fear man on account of the suffering he can inflict on you, much more should you fear God, who is able to inflict much greater suffering." So far there is merely the change of the object of fear. But the nature of the fear is still the same. Then he changes the very nature of the fear by representing God as caring for the very humblest of His creatures, and much more for man, the noblest of His creatures on earth, and especially for His apostles, who need to labor and suffer for His sake. Thus He absolves fear.

We have not words to distinguish the different meanings of fear; but an effective speaker, much more a preacher, should in every case understand the sense in which he uses the word. The fear of the Lord is used in Scripture to denote the feelings of wicked men towards Himself, and also of devils. It is also used as a class-work to denote all proper religious affection. It is called the beginning of wisdom. It characterizes His saints. "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy."

The Lord shows how anxiety in reference to worldly things may be suppressed by trusting in God and setting one's affections on spiritual and heavenly things. Thus covetousness may be transformed into seeking one's chief good and laying up treasure in Heaven. There is a great blank to be filled. A man must have something to seek and love supremely. So Christ takes away worthless

and perishing things and gives the true riches. See Matthew VI. This is much more effectual than showing that riches make to themselves wings, etc.

General illustrations: To produce repentance it is necessary to enliven the idea of duty by setting forth God's claims and the extent and spirituality of His law; and by showing how His favor is to be obtained, thus connecting your subject with the first and third classes of religious ideas referred to, thus producing "a true sense of sin and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ." To encourage Christians to maintain a conflict with sin, enliven the idea of holiness by showing its excellence, and by proving that by divine grace it was obtainable. To stimulate Christians to send the Gospel to the heathen, enliven the sense of duty and allegiance to Christ and, to excite compassion towards the heathen set forth the privileges, joys and hopes of true Christians. This is much more effectual than describing the degradation and misery of the heathen. Be careful, when necessary, to convince your hearers of the possibility of performing the duties which you inculcate, or of attaining the blessings which you present. Motives are powerless when the idea of impossibility is present in the mind. Let that be removed, and the full force of the motives will be felt, and the affections will awaken and exert their power.

There is no use in exciting feelings of a purely æsthetic nature. Feelings entirely destitute of religion may thus be awakened. Thus a description of the Lord's agony and death on the Cross will pro-

duce feelings similar to those excited by the description of any great suffering. The power to convert the soul does not lie in the excruciating pain and agony of Christ on the Cross, but on their moral nature as the punishment of our sins, and as the means of satisfying divine justice; and in their revealing the wonderful love of God, and the tender compassion of the Saviour.

Many professed Christians trust to such feelings entirely, they constitute the main part of their religious experience. Hence, they must be excited. Men who can excite them are sought after. Special meetings are often held to produce such excitement. There is in many a kind of morbid luxury in feelings which greatly excite, but do not stimulate the conscience and lead to a decided and permanent change of life. Hence you will find persons after such excitement, retiring to enjoy or amuse themselves in a frivolous manner. This is also true of some preachers. This would be impossible were the feelings of a truly religious nature. It is said that it is merely a natural reaction from the previous mental tension or excitement. But there should be no reaction from genuine religious affection. Such feelings do not weary; they are not spasmodic, but continuous. They produce true rest and peace in the soul. The fact that there are multitudes of this kind always craving for excitement may teach us to strive to speak with affection and to excite affection. We should take advantage of their presence in church, and seek to give them excitement of a high, holy and permanent kind.

Purely natural and social feelings may be taken advantage of to lead to serious thought, but if they are not pervaded by a moral element they are of no value. The pathetic description of a deathbed scene may awaken such feeling, and yet it may be merely fear of death and the love of life, unless the connection of death with sin, and the need of mercy and of holiness to prepare for it, are clearly interwoven with it. The grief of an undutiful son on account of displeasing an affectionate father will do no real and permanent good unless he is made to feel that he has sinned against Heaven as the prodigal did, and unless he is led to seek forgiveness, not merely from his parents, but also from God. Natural feelings sometimes dispose to serious thought and soften the heart superficially. But neither æsthetic nor natural feelings should be mistaken or substituted for religious affection.

II. *The Subject Matter of discourse must be adapted to the hearers.*

Philosophical explanation or proof is not rhetorical. Long trains of reasoning take up much time, exhaust patience and produce such mental tension as prevents the growth of affection. They are not suited to persuasion. True oratory does not aim at giving full information, but merely such an amount of it as is compatible with rhetorical qualities, and as may produce the impression required. Hence we must preach on great themes. If we do so we shall produce thirst for the Word of God; and we shall inspire and direct our hearers, as

Paul did, to search the Scriptures for themselves. Rhetorical skill will enable you to impart a large amount of information in an impressive manner, but not much reasoning. Besides, as previously shown, excessive reasoning arrests rhetorical development and hinders the growth of affection.

Aristotle clearly perceived this. He says that the *Enthymeme* is the rhetoricians' syllogism. By this term he does not mean a syllogism with a premise or the conclusion suppressed, but the kind of proof designated Signs, i. e., mainly testimony and authority.—Sir William Hamilton. The latter proves that the enthymeme referred to in this connection is merely the argument from signs, which has already been explained, and which, so far as the orator is concerned, is mainly testimony and authority. Understood etymologically, as formerly, Aristotle's statement was foolish; for no man, whether orator or not, speaks in syllogisms or discusses subjects in a manner so stiff, formal and tedious. Logical proof belongs to the category of truth, rhetorical to that of persuasion. The question, then, is not, What is the best proof absolutely? but, relatively, What is the best for persuasion?

Now, as we shall see, the Bible furnishes in the greatest abundance the precise kind of proof that Aristotle says is suited to oratory. The Gospel is addressed to us on the authority of God revealed in His Word, the only authority on which eternal life could be reasonably—or even possibly—offered to sinners, and future misery threatened; and on

the authority of God revealed in the moral and religious nature which He has given us, and which is capable of responding to the presentation of the remedy, as we have seen. The authority of God is thus presented to us both objectively and subjectively; and when it is accompanied by the Holy Spirit the highest assurance is obtained. Thus the true believer "hath the witness in himself." John III :31-32; I John V :10.

No philosopher could say: "Believe this and you will be saved, disbelieve this and you will be lost." What are God's purposes in reference to sinners of the human race can be ascertained only from His Word. It cannot be discovered by reason. Hence Paul, when addressing the Corinthians, expressly called his preaching "declaring the testimony of God." This is suited to all alike, old and young, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, persons in health and persons so sick that they are not able to understand elaborate reasoning, or, indeed, any reasoning at all. The Gospel message is attested by prophecy, miracles, and the influence of the Holy Spirit accompany it. Acts XXVI :22-23; Gal. III :2-5. Our Lord teaches that miracles were intended to be the testimonials of a teacher sent from God. "No man can do these works," etc. "If I had not done among them the works," etc. They are supernatural; so is the doctrine, and they sustain one another. The Lord wrought a miracle to prove that He had a right to forgive sin. Moral duties are revealed or enforced by the same authority, so

that they have not to be deduced from first principles, which would be fatal to eloquence.

Then there is the suitableness of the remedy. There is experience of its power to relieve the conscience, to purify the heart, and to form and ennoble the character. This is a psychological proof. It is an evidence that all true Christians enjoy. It is a matter of consciousness. "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine." The truth shall make you free. The Gospel can do all that needs to be done for our salvation. An appeal may be made to human experience in all ages, showing that all spiritually minded persons in the church have embraced the great doctrines of grace and have had substantially the same religious character and experience. Church creeds, Christian history and biography amply test these truths. You may appeal to the amount of good the Gospel has done, and the persecution and the scepticism against which it has successfully contended.

This kind of proof is in the truest sense popular. I do not classify these kinds of proof or suppose that you should require to be constantly insisting upon it. But you can easily see the material of truth that is at your disposal, and which should give you confidence. Now, considering the grandeur of Gospel themes, the rhetorical nature of the proof on which it is presented, the abundance, variety and convincing nature of the proof, pulpit eloquence should be superior to all other eloquence. Poor preaching is unworthy of such a subject.

III. *You should adapt your discourse to the moral and religious maxims, beliefs, sentiments and even prejudices of your hearers, and even of the community at large.*

E. g. "Man must live for something higher than himself." "Be just before you are generous." "Success is a test of merit." "It is seldom given to man to do unmixed good." "When once you begin to deviate from a rule you will never know when to stop." "The wisdom of our ancestors." "The advantages of paternal government in the state." "The Shibboleths of religious sects." These maxims are principals of action. If you can assimilate the subject of discourse with one or more of these, it will exert a powerful influence.

There is in this specific adaptation. You thus manifest sympathy with your hearers' habits of thought and feeling, and incorporate your ideas with theirs. In this consists true popularity of discourse. You thus avoid coming into collision with sentiments and prejudices, unnecessarily, and enable your hearers to yield without undue humiliation. This sympathy with the hearers' habits of thought and feeling is the main condition of the popularity of illiterate preachers. Educated men should not deprecate, but imitate it. As some of these maxims or prejudices may seriously obstruct discourse—the last three being fallacies—it may be necessary to remove them. But nothing less than intimate intercourse and acquaintance with persons can enable you to adapt the matter of discourse to them. In

addressing a large audience you must make the best general estimate you can. In some cases you will find your hearers classified, as when you preach for a St. Andrew's Society, to an Orange Lodge, to a temperance society or to a Young Men's Christian Association. In each of these one sentiment predominates. If you connect your discourse with it you will speak acceptably and effectively; if you do not, your discourse will be a failure, or something worse.

We have already referred to classifying your hearers in your own mind, now we wish to indicate the manifest impropriety of avowedly classifying persons as unbelievers and believers in a professedly religious assembly. In such an assembly, in ordinary cases, there are believers and non-believers, but no unbelievers, or, what is much worse, disbelievers. The fact that your hearers have come voluntarily to a place set apart for preaching the Gospel entitles you to assume that they are either believers in Christ, or desirous of becoming such. They are manifestly entitled to this charitable estimate of their state of mind.

It is also without Scripture precedent, as the Apostles in speaking and writing never seemed to make this distinction. Besides, it is not called for, as conversion and sanctification are one continuous work, carried on by presenting the same Gospel truths. II Tim. III :15-17. Truths supposed to be specially fitted to convert sinners, are often most edifying to sincere Christians; and

truths revealing Christian life and experience, have often exerted a most powerful and saving attraction on non-believers. I Cor. XIV:24-25; Acts II:42-47. Moreover, it teaches hearers to classify themselves often wrongly, and to judge what in a sermon is adapted to them alone, and to give no attention to anything else. In fine, it is unrhetorical. It destroys the unity of the discourse, its definite aim, and especially its application.

In Acts XIII:16, the words "men of Israel and ye that fear God" are not a classification of this kind. This was the usual way of addressing Jews and proselytes, both of whom may have been truly religious persons. Although much fault is found with many of the Corinthians, yet they are collectively addressed as "the Church of God which is at Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." The Apostles classified persons as knowing and not knowing the Gospel. In fine, a division is not needed, as sanctification is a continuation of the work begun in regeneration, and carried on by the presentation of the same Gospel truths. Hence, truths often benefit a class opposite to that intended by the preacher. Any evangelical doctrine clearly and impressively preached is fitted to benefit any attentive hearer, and may be used by the Spirit of God either for conversion or edification. It is stated in Acts II that Christian graces and worship, after Pentecost, were most attractive to non-believers; and Paul speaks of the great impression that was made on

such by preaching religious experience. I Cor. XIV:23-25.

On the other hand, many eminently learned and godly ministers, in the early years of their ministry, and for their own personal edification, have read with much profit the Confessions of Augustine, and the Sermons of President Edwards. The aged and eminent Dr. Archibald Alexander, when asked in his last illness what he then thought of theology, replied: "My theology is very simple now, it amounts to this, 'It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came in the world to save sinners.'" An impulsive person once called on Dr. Alexander and wished the aged professor to adopt revival methods, and failing to persuade Dr. Alexander asked him if he had any religion at all. Dr. Alexander gently replied, "I have none to boast of."

Besides, in persuasive discourse it is your interest to minimize the difference between their views and yours. By addressing them thus you conciliate their good will, and you connect the subject of your discourse with anything in their minds that is favorable to it, or anything which, by such address, may be made favorable. If you should suppose that there is nothing in their minds to which you could attach religious discourse, you should remember that there is a moral and religious nature. This address will help to enliven and vivify it. It is important to have a clear view of the sphere in which popular truth in preaching

the Gospel is to be found, of the nature of such proof, and of its adaptation to the rhetorical preaching of the Gospel and to the generality of mankind to whom the word of salvation is sent.

It should not be forgotten that in a settled and long pastorate variety in both matter and method is needed. Variety of matter is found in abundance in the Bible. If the whole council of God is to be preached there will be very great variety, even when it is not sought for. Let the minister habitually study the Word of God, with the aid, if need be, of good exegetical works, and this will soon reveal itself in his preaching. It will also be secured by preaching on subjects in the same proportion in which they are presented in Scripture. Thus he will be prevented from traveling around a circle of very small and always contracting circumference. Deal with the specific idea contained in your text and you will have endless variety. Variety of matter is as needful for the soul as variety of food is for the body. Variety of method is also needed. There are expository, simple and complex methods in subjects; there are doctrines and precepts contained in doctrinal, historic, prophetic, biographical and also in figurative texts. "Every scribe that is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Matt. XIII:52.

IV. *The style of discourse must be adapted to the education or culture of the hearers.* Language

that can be easily understood and in which the Saxon element predominates, should be used. A clear, vigorous style should be acquired, all dead and enfeebling words should be avoided. Many think it important to acquire an elegant, polished style. For this alone rhetoric used to be studied. Dr. Shedd says that this brought rhetoric into merited and lasting contempt. It was said of Dr. Blair, an eminent writer on rhetoric, that his sermons were like a frosty night, clear and cold. It is a great mistake so to polish and beautify language that it draws away attention from ideas or sentiments which it is intended to express. It enfeebles discourse. It is the perfection of language used by an orator not to be noticed at all, as it is the perfection of eloquence and elocution.

It is no compliment to a powerful speaker to say that he is eloquent; he is something far higher than this. On hearing him the mind is filled with the subject, excited and transported by it. When this is the case the hearer notices neither the words nor the speaker. It is said that when an ordinary orator spoke the Athenians said, "What a beautiful oration." When Demosthenes spoke they said, "Let us go and fight Philip!" When a man begins to use beautiful expressions and beautiful figures for their own sake, that moment he converts his hearers into spectators and makes himself an object of admiration. This kind of discourse ancient Greeks called epideictic, and the Romans called it demonstration—both mean, for the sake of dis-

play. We deprecate style to the extent of saying that it is very much inferior to the matter of discourse.

There is need of insisting on this as the general opinion seems to be that style is the only thing that rhetoric has to teach. This mistake has been formed and fostered by books on rhetoric which seek to teach only correct or beautiful composition, not only those by Ancients like Longinus and Quintilian, but by moderns like Blair, Bain and Whately. The latter refused to put "persuasion" into his definition of rhetoric. This error is so deeply rooted that it seems impossible to eradicate it. Hence, the emphatic statement we have frequently made on the point. Persuasive eloquence is in sentiments, not in words. If words accurately expressed the persuasive sentiment, the style should not be noticed at all. But even this is a very great excellence. Even reading the Word of God in the pulpit should not be such as to occasion unfavorable comment. What a contrast there is between the style of Addison and that of Dr. Johnson! The one is suited to public speaking, the other is not. Any ordinary audience, or even an audience of laborers, could easily understand Addison. The beauty and power of rhetorical discourse are not in words, but in sentiments. Hence, what best expresses the orator's idea, and best suits his audience, will please the most cultivated, while anything else, no matter how beautiful it may seem in itself, will offend good taste, as much

as painting a diamond or a piece of burnished gold. The words should be so adapted and subordinated to the subject as not to be noticed at all. But to smother an idea in words, or to bury it under flowers, will offend any man of common sense.

Many say that anecdotes that please the illiterate offend the educated. I would say, be careful not to use anecdotes freely. The man who does so feels that there is no interest in his subject; hence, he must import the interest. He who trusts in anecdotes is the first to run out; he will not last more than two years in any place.

Many find difficulty in the use of illustrations as those that please one class may offend another. It is the height of folly to introduce illustrations into a speech to become rivals of the moral or religious ideas of the speaker. A speech or sermon thus becomes like a Christmas tree which has no root, no value; but is merely used to hang Chinese lanterns on and beautiful things to please children. They suppose in addressing the humbler classes they must follow illustrations from their trades or occupations. This is a dangerous thing. These persons perfectly understand their own occupations and the preacher does not. Hence, he is almost sure to make mistakes. e. g. The case of the shepherd in Scotland who perceived that a preacher in explaining the 23rd Psalm understood the still water as providing drink for the sheep. Hence, he was convinced that the preacher was a very stupid person, who was not competent

to teach him. Correct exegesis would have prevented the occurrence of this mistake. I have heard from the pulpit illustrations borrowed from agriculture and architecture that convinced me that the preacher understood neither his subject nor the illustration of it. Scripture figures should be used sparingly, i. e., not allegorized.

It is a great pity when a preacher underestimates the shrewdness and general information of his people. They are keen observers of nature and they are acquainted with the affairs of domestic and social life. On the other hand, to please educated persons, many think it necessary to borrow illustrations from science and philosophy. Here again speakers are just as likely to make mistakes, and to lead people to suspect that they wish to make a parade of learning that they do not possess, which is damaging.

Educated and uneducated persons should both be interested in the subject of discourse; hence, if illustrations, however plain, illustrate the subject, supposing that the subject needs illustration, they will please all alike. If illustrations are superfluous, or too numerous, they are offended, and readily notice any fault or incongruity. But let him speak with the knowledge of his subject and the taste that an educated man only can possess and he will edify and please all. The correct principle to guide one in this matter is that illustrations should be in good taste, that they be used only to illustrate the subject, and that no more of them

be used than are needed for this purpose alone. Illustrations must not cast the subject into the shade. Lord Chesterfield was right when he said, in substance, that any large audience is to be addressed as you would address the common people; such an audience expects this; and a lively feeling of sympathy pervading such an audience approves of it.

The Bible is full of such illustrations suited to all, and models which may well be imitated. Were preachers more familiar with the Word of God, they would find all that they need. The language of the Bible, which is neither learned nor vulgar, is adapted to all; while the remedy which it reveals is suited to all; for all stand before God on the same level. For example: The paternal love of God or the case of the Prodigal Son; Christ's desire to save even one soul in the case of the lost sheep; the tendency of the knowledge of God to humble and prostrate a person in the case of Job; "I have heard of Thee, etc."; of Isaiah when he saw the Lord "sitting in the temple high," etc.; of Peter when he said, "depart from me."

These and many others are so familiar to Gospel hearers that they do not need any introduction or explanation, but may be suggested by a single phrase. These are illustrations borrowed from the Word of God that reveal His glory. But illustrations that tend to degrade a subject should not be used, no matter how forcible they may be.

Rhetorical Amplification is of great value, as it enables you to keep the idea of your sermon for

some time in conscious contact with your hearers' minds. This stimulates and helps hearers to think on a subject a sufficient time to experience a decided impression. Dr. Chalmers excelled in this. People, however, are wearied when it is too long continued. Rhetorical skill and inspiration are needed to make one feel the points which should be amplified.

Rhetorical amplification can be effected sometimes by brief and summary iteration and recapitulation; and more generally by rhetorical explanation, as in the simple methods; and sometimes by proof. But the reasoning must not require too much thought, nor should it require too little. There is great art in suggesting thoughts which hearers may follow out in a manner best fitted to effect their own minds.

Care must be taken to exclude or suppress anything that might check the growth of affection, and also to present illustrations in the peculiar aspects and outlines that are fitted to produce the deepest impression. Such amplification must not be incoherent but must be based on correct analysis; and the matter must increase in interest till the crisis is reached.

When dealing with the feelings at the close of a sermon when the hearers crave and expect an influence to be exerted, the utmost delicacy must be used. Taste must not be offended. Conflicting feelings must not be excited. Neither should one analyze a desire and also its object, as this would naturally lead to repetition. Were you to speak

of desiring the blessedness of the heavenly state, you would naturally resolve it into beholding the glory of God, being like Him and enjoying His favor. On the other hand, were you to analyze the desire of the blessedness, you would naturally analyze the desire in the same way. These are virtually the same; hence, much repetition is not proper amplification. You can do either the one or the other, as is most suitable to your subject, but not both. You cannot be too careful in this delicate process of concluding amplification.

There should also be in rhetorical amplification, especially at the close of a period or sermon, a good deal of vivacity combined with good taste, and a fine glow of feeling thrown into the style. It is not easy to lay down rules for this. Every man, in this delicate process, must be a law to himself. Poetry is out of place here, unless it be that of affection, and then only sparingly introduced. What are called figures of rhetoric are more properly figures of poetry. Genuine affection, when it is kindled into a blaze, will suggest many happy turns of thought and expression. But this must not be overdone. Vulgar and faded ornaments are quite out of place here.

V. *The discourse should be adapted to the hearers' circumstances and state of mind at the time.* This is the most specific adaptation of all. Peculiar states of mind prevail in certain specific circumstances, e. g., Thanksgiving Services. When these are suitably observed you will find a whole assembly affected in precisely the same manner.

This was wont to be the case with our annual Thanksgiving. A whole nation was prepared for the service. Ministers and people for weeks had their attention directed to God's mercies and to His kindness in bestowing them. A feeling of thankfulness and also a sense of unworthiness prevailed. Then preachers made earnest preparation for the service and the people made similar preparation to hear and respond to the sermons; and a very deep and lasting impression was very often made.

But we have lost all this now. We have now merely a day of frivolity, amusement and self-indulgence. Who is to blame for this? The preachers undoubtedly. They did not adapt their sermons and devotions to the sentiments that should prevail. This is a grave rhetorical fault. Even if the fault belongs also to the people for not desiring such religious services, the preachers should have adapted their sermons to what the people should desire. But instead of this they discussed municipal and political matters. Then the congregation gave up the day and devoted one hour, either in the morning or in the evening, to the service. The next thing was to collect several congregations into one church to show fraternal kindness. Thus only those who belonged to the church in which they met felt bound to attend. Then there were special services connected with the observance of the Lord's Supper. Then, as special preparation by the minister, there were hard study and earnest prayer; and on the part of the members

and their families there was corresponding preparation. Here was a most interesting case of a minister seeking to adapt his preaching to a most solemn service, and a whole congregation seeking to prepare themselves for the same service. The adaptation in this case was complete.

This shows the wonderful elasticity of Presbyterian services, which our people might take fuller advantage of than they do. It seems that the ordinary services of the sanctuary are not sufficient for the religious wants of the people, otherwise there would be no sphere at all for itinerant, irresponsible evangelists. Now, the want might be fully supplied without undue excitement, newspaper reports and blowing of trumpets, if these special periodical services were extended more or less to meet the spiritual tastes and wants of the people. It is strange that this is not realized. The services connected with the Lord's Supper might commence on the Friday previous, and continue so as to include the Monday following. Here are four days of service without interruption, or display, or sensation. In country places the services might all be during the day, while in cities the extra services might be held in the evening.

These, and other cases that might be mentioned, established the fact that special services of any kind that are adapted to the circumstances of the people and their prevailing state of mind are most impressive and valuable. In such cases you might adapt your preaching to a whole congregation, whatever the character of individuals may be, pro-

vided that all are pervaded by one sentiment or feeling. Whether the services connected with the communion be many or few, the people expect and even demand that the pastor make special preparation for them. The more thoroughly they are prepared, the less disposed are they to forgive want of preparation on his part.

B. *Adaptation of the speaker to his hearers and subject.*

It is easy to see the importance of this. The speaker should be identified with his subject; he has invented it and it must bear the impress of his mind. His character and state of mind must represent the truths that he preaches. Hence, the personality of the preacher should be perceived by his hearers. It is this that makes the preaching of the Gospel from the diffusion of its truths by the printing press. Our Lord plainly had this in view when he appointed that His Gospel should be presented to the world by the voice of the preacher. We are bound to recognize this. We are bound for the sake of Christ's honor so to preach that no one shall have the hardihood to speak of the "foolishness of preaching," or use the expression "dull as a sermon."

Young ministers should know that there are some, perhaps many of their hearers, who understand the Gospel much better than they, and whose religious experience is much greater than theirs. Humanly speaking, the main superiority of the preacher to the hearers is not in knowledge, but in preaching power. Hence, if he fails in this,

his failure must be complete. Viewing the divine aspect of the matter, the difference is this, that the sincere minister is called by Christ, is Christ's ambassador, and enjoys Christ's promise to be with him in preaching.

Further, the preacher's state of mind when preaching is as important as the hearers' state of mind when hearing. Hence, the sermon which he delivered impressively two months ago may not at all suit him now. If his spiritual state is not as it should be, or does not correspond to the sermon, he cannot properly preach it at all.

1. He must be influenced by warm affection towards his hearers, and a sincere desire to promote their spiritual interests, their eternal salvation—the most benevolent affection. He must love much if he would do much good. This feeling must be so strong as to overcome every selfish feeling, such as desire of popularity or personal aggrandizement. These cannot co-exist with piety and benevolence in preaching. It is strange that young preachers are so anxious for notoriety and applause. They contrive to get some notice of themselves or their movements into newspapers almost every day. They are excited and attracted when they see a platform. They are ready to make speeches to all societies, and on all subjects, whether sacred or secular. The truth is, some have the capacity of being puffed; they cannot do without it. There are other ministers who would consider flattery impertinent. Desire of emolument, when it gains the ascendency in the preacher's mind,

makes him resemble Simon Magus rather than our Lord and His Apostles.

Greater kindness on the part of the preacher will make not only himself but his preaching more acceptable; it will disarm prejudice. This kindness does not imply familiarity. When a minister is not engaged in official duty, he should act simply as gentlemen do. He does not need always to feel conscious of his office. Hearers will certainly reciprocate kind feeling. Many who cannot be influenced by the most powerful arguments may be constrained by love.

2. He should have confidence in the Gospel as the means, and the only means, of saving sinners. He should have confidence in the ministry as a divine institution; and he must have confidence in his call to it. He should have confidence in Christ's promised presence and aid, and in the Holy Spirit to render preaching effectual. This confidence should amount to a strong assurance. This can be enjoyed only when a minister lives up to his profession and when his conscience does not condemn him. Hesitancy due to scientific or any other difficulties or doubts, or to anxiety to find scientific support for truths which rest and must necessarily rest, on the testimony of God, will impair the influence which the truth is fitted to exert. He should have confidence in the suitableness of his subject to secure the definite object which he has in view; and, above all, he should have confidence in the promised aid of the Holy

Spirit to give testimony to the Word of God's grace. Although the absolute necessity of divine influence need not interfere with the rhetorical form of discourse, yet it should powerfully affect the preacher's mind, and lead to humble and unreserved reliance on divine grace. This will give confidence and assurance to his heart and it will impart the accent of conviction to his words.

3. He should himself be affected by his subject precisely as he wishes his hearers to be affected by it. If he preaches repentance, he should speak as a true penitent. If he preaches faith in Christ, he should speak as one who knows in whom he has believed. If he preaches "the terror of the Lord," it should be as one who has felt it, and has been relieved of it only by divine grace. He should be deeply in earnest. But this can never be merely by trying to be in earnest. Such earnestness will be sure to defeat itself. Genuine earnestness in preaching cannot be attained by direct effort; but must be inspired by desire to do good to souls, and by confidence in the Gospel and in the power of the Holy Spirit to give effect to it. Then earnestness will be spontaneous, without conscious effort, proceeding from the heart. It will communicate itself to the hearers. A minister should feel that he is a man of like passions with his hearers—one of those whom Christ came to seek and to save, one who is still fighting, with varying success, the good fight of faith that he may lay hold on eternal life. He should be able

to say, "Homo sum et nihil humanum a me alienum puto." He must speak with affection if he would excite affection. Thus his feelings will be natural; and they should be sincere, as this is indispensable to the excitation of religious affection. His feelings, while slightly in advance of his hearers, and a little more intense, must be under due control, otherwise he will betray weakness which may excite disgust instead of sympathy.

It is important, when a man preaches with affection, that he should have control over his feelings. They should be a little in advance of his hearers' feelings, but not much. Cicero points this out. This is very difficult, as the preacher has all the matter in the discourse that is fitted to excite emotion present to his mind from the very beginning of his discourse. If he manifests strong feeling and excitement while the hearers are calm they will consider him fanatical or sensational. Whereas, if they are gradually moved with the progress of the discourse the excitement will be natural, and it may become as intense as the preacher could wish. Thus the movement of the discourse must control the delivery of it. This feeling will affect the tone of his voice and the emphasis which he places on his words; it will prevent monotony and unnaturalness; it will guide his gestures and make them not only natural but a source of power. To speak thus he must not only have a well-constructed discourse, but he must have his mind thoroughly imbued with it, and his

soul enflamed with the feelings which he wishes to glow in the hearts of his hearers. "Si vis me flere, dolendum est sibi ipsi primum."

Many think it reveals great courage to rebuke sin, and denounce transgressors. But there is little courage when the hearers are not permitted to reply. Besides, the thing disapproved tends to exasperate and harden, not to convert. Such preaching will not be likely to touch either the conscience or the heart. It is specially offensive because it seems more like hatred of persons than hatred of sin. It leads the careless and irreligious to dislike ministers of the Gospel and their preaching. This dislike is general; and it is easily accounted for.

Although the various processes of invention of the subject, explanation and proof, movement and adaptation, have been viewed separately and have been discussed successively, yet in the construction of discourse they are carried on simultaneously. In inventing the subject, you give it organic structure and definite practical direction. In arranging your matter and proof, you seek to secure movement and adaptation. In proving you may have to explain, and in explaining you may have to prove. While the interest must increase gradually until the crisis is reached, yet sufficient interest must be kept up from beginning to end to secure attention. Beauty of form and illustration must characterize, not only the main outlines, but also the subordinate parts, and minute details.

You cannot fail to notice that the persuasive power resides in what we call the subject; and that this power, so far as it is needful or available, is to be brought out and applied to the understanding by explanation and proof, and that, through the understanding, the same power is applied to feelings or affections, and will, by movement and adaptation. Thus the subject is applied to all the powers of the mind of your hearers for the purpose of persuasion.

Resumé: If there be power in the subject, and if it be clearly and distinctly unfolded by correct analysis or division, and, if need be, proved; if it be successively applied to all the parts of the hearer's mind; if it be accurately adapted to his faculties, culture, maxims, and circumstances, and incorporated or identified with the principles of action; and if by skilful amplification it be kept for a suitable time in living contact with his mind; and if, on the other hand, it be allowed to exert its full power on the preacher himself, revealing itself in his countenance, gestures, and tones of voice, it may be expected to influence his hearer as much as it possibly can do in his hands, and to lead him to think, feel and will as he does. More than this homiletical culture cannot aim at. God only can give effective testimony to the Word of His grace, and "make man willing in the day of His power."

APPENDIX

CHAPTER XII

APPENDIX: THE EXORDIUM

The Exordium.—This is the least important part of a discourse, for if the hearers perceive the meaning of the subject, and are prepared to give it an attentive, and also a favorable hearing, the exordium may be dispensed with. The excellencies of introductions are mainly negative. Hence, a person is not inclined to commend a good introduction, while he is ready to condemn a bad one. An introduction is not composed for its own sake, but for the sake of the subject that it introduces. Excellence in this is mainly due to experience; beginners seldom make a good introduction, while experienced speakers seldom make a bad one. To enable you to compose a suitable introduction, you must have a distinct view of your subject, your method, and the end you wish to gain. Hence, although the introduction should be written before the sermon, yet it should not be written till you are fully prepared to write the whole sermon.

As the mind may be favorably or unfavorably disposed, either by the information it possesses or by its feelings or purpose, there are two kinds of introductions—the Explanatory and the Conciliatory.

Explanatory Introduction.—This is the easiest, most natural, and common, when a Christian congregation is addressed.

1. You may explain the connection in which the text stands, its true meaning, and its suitableness to present edification. If you take only one idea out of a text in which there are several ideas, it is due to the text and the latter that the text be explained, and that the points that you do not intend to discuss, be respectfully waived. Hence, the simple explanatory and confirmatory discourses generally require an explanatory introduction; and they will very well bear it. If this is taken advantage of, these discourses may be as expository as desirable.

2. You may make any critical or exegetical remarks that are needed, so that the movement of discourse may not be subsequently arrested. But these remarks must be brief, and you must not indicate, at this stage, the use you intend to make of them.

3. You may remove objections to your subject which may spring out of misapprehension of it.

Conciliatory Introduction.—This respects more the person of the speaker or hearer, and the circumstances of time and place.

1. (a) You may anticipate and remove prejudices against your theme, or your manner of treating it.

(b) You may allay unfavorable feelings, and gently excite such as correspond to the spirit of

your sermon. The less of a personal nature introduced the better. The preacher should introduce his subject, not himself. The Ancients sought mainly to conciliate good will to themselves, to prove that they were sincere and honest, and that they had made no special preparation for speaking—and thus to allay suspicion. If a preacher is a good man he will not need to conciliate good will to himself. However, to a stranger preaching to strangers, the introduction is of vital importance, as from it they will estimate his qualifications as a speaker; hence, it should be carefully prepared.

2. The style of the introduction should be clear, correct and simple. People are calm at the outset and thus they can detect defects. It is a great matter that they should see that the preacher knows precisely what he intends to do. This will secure an attentive and respectful hearing.

3. The common faults of introductions.

(1) Their length. Young preachers are afraid their matter will fail, and hence they introduce what is irrelevant. This is a great mistake. As you can calculate on only a limited amount of patience, it is a pity to use up much of it at the beginning.

(2) Their brilliancy. Fine figures and illustrations should not be placed in the introduction, as it is difficult to maintain such a style and elevation.

(3) Anticipation of the sermon and its interest. The discourse may be impoverished by the introduction; and the matter, method, and design

may be made so plain as to deprive the sermon of interest.

(4) Irrelevant matter. If the matter be further removed from the views and feelings of the audience than the subject itself it clearly cannot introduce the subject, but the subject might introduce it. This is a great mistake. They seek by this to awaken interest in the subject; but the interest in this case is frequently away from the subject. It is strange how far some will wander till there is difficulty in getting back to the subject, while a good introduction is lying before them.

It is often asked when the subject should be announced. In confirmatory discourses the subject, when stated at the beginning, is called the *Proposition;* when stated at the end, it is called the *Conclusion.* It can, if need be, occupy an intermediate space. If the subject is a difficult one, it should be stated immediately after the introduction, which should prepare for it. If the subject is—although most important—very simple, it should not be emphatically stated, or it should be placed in a new point of view. If the subject is fitted to awaken hostility—even after a conciliatory introduction—it is better to state it in a general way, but not to espouse either side till after the arguments for each side have been canvassed. Special prominence should be given to points in which speaker and hearers are agreed. Even if these are not of much account, they may help to disarm prejudice and establish pleasant relations with the

audience and procure a fair hearing. In Simple Methods, the Heads should not be preannounced, as it is not necessary, and it is fitted to anticipate interest.

The Peroration.—This is the form in which the discourse is terminated, not something added to a complete discourse. It requires earnest meditation, as much of the practical effect of the sermon depends on it. At the end of an impressive sermon the hearers are under your influence and they expect it to be kindly exerted. If this is not done, a painful disappointment, or even shock, is felt, as if no practical effect was produced, or as if all the thought and excitation were thrown away.

1st. The whole discourse should be constructed with a view to its termination. Its practical aim should secure this. It is a mistake to neglect this, or to leave it to be suggested during the excitement of delivery.

2nd. The Peroration should be directly connected with the theme of the sermon, and spring out of the very heart of it. It should be the application of the body of the sermon, its power being concentrated on one point, not the application of the last head or argument.

3rd. The peroration should be specific, and express so accurately the spirit of the sermon that it could not properly belong to any other.

Several kinds of peroration.—1st. There is the recapitulation of the leading arguments or heads, followed by a brief, pathetic amplification. This

last should be concise and vigorous. It suits well many argumentative discourses in which the heads are not preannounced. Their concentrated force is felt only when they are recapitulated.

2nd. There are inferences drawn from the body of the discourse. This is a natural and an easy method. It is suited to very profound subjects, as the Trinity, God's eternal purposes, His omnipresence, etc. The inferences must be practical and homogeneous, and unity must be carefully preserved.

3rd. There is that which consists of a direct address to the affections, for which the whole sermon has been a preparation. This requires much taste and feeling. It is suited to discourses in which some duty is inculcated. It should not be long—in all cases tediousness and feeble repetition are to be condemned. Do not promise to conclude and after all go on till hearers are wearied. The difficulty of concluding a discourse is generally due to its faulty structure. A bad discourse is sure to retain its character to the very end. Let your last words be some sententious saying, or some carefully selected passage of Scripture.

EXTEMPORANEOUS PREACHING.

By this is meant preaching without writing. It is not to be mistaken for preaching without adequate preparation. As an extemporaneous sermon must be constructed on the same principles as a written one, it is not necessary to repeat these here.

It is important to consider this at present, as very many, especially young persons, are inclined to it. Our forefathers seldom attempted it and they generally failed when they did make the attempt.

In consequence of extempore preaching, congregations are often treated to sermons that are quite empty, having neither thought nor feeling, but incoherent and exaggerated statements, and also illustrations when there is nothing to illustrate. This is a great evil. Some consider it an evidence of faith on their part, and of divine help. But there is no room for faith in the matter, if God has not promised to help men who will not study, and to compensate for their ignorance and indolence. Were God to do so it would be contrary to all his other dealings with His creatures, so far as we know. Besides the perfection of such faith would be vacuity of mind and ignorance. What I have mainly in view, at present, is to show the true nature of the only extemporaneous preaching that is worthy of the name; to show what rare and high attainment it is; and also the great and persevering labor that it demands. It may be said that there is another point in which an extemporaneous sermon differs from a written one, which is that it is not, and indeed cannot be, read. But this is not an essential distinction, it is a mere accident, as the great majority of written sermons, especially in Presbyterian churches, are not read.

It may be well, then, to consider whether written sermons should be read or spoken from memory. So far as I know, all the great statesmen

and orators of ancient times delivered their speeches from memory. Cicero frequently represents a good memory as an indispensable qualification for an orator. And instead of granting indulgence to persons whose memory was supposed to be defective, he insisted that it should be diligently cultivated. He maintained that every faculty that we possess is susceptible of higher culture. Hence, the Ancients had various systems of mnemonics. There are still traces of this in common language. Thus persons speak of one thing in the first place and of another in the second place, plainly taking advantage of locality to aid the memory. Orators, we are told, borrowed local allusions from their own dwellings with which they were familiar.

It is not long since congregations would not tolerate reading in the pulpit. They spoke with ridicule of preachers who prayed publicly for the direction and help of the Holy Spirit in preaching, while all they intended to say was lying in MS. on the desk before them. There is no doubt that reading sermons is not popular. Hearers say that the manuscript is like a wall between them and the preacher, that the preacher looks at his paper, not at them. Hence, too, the fascination of the speaker's eye, of his natural voice and of his countenance illuminated by the influence of his subject, are entirely lost. Thus reading sermons is clearly not acceptable. One great thing in reading sermons is the security that it affords that they are studied.

It is thus clear that if sermons to be acceptable must be spoken from memory, and if all sermons must be constructed on sound rhetorical principles, that the only real and fundamental difference between extemporaneous sermons and others is that the former are not written.

GENERAL REMARKS:

1. (a) The subject of an extempore sermon must be thoroughly matured. If not there will be danger of making great mistakes, that cannot be corrected. This is indispensable to safety. You may suddenly stumble on a matter that you wish to ignore. A single word may lead to this, and to perplexity, or hesitancy, at least. There must be a clear and definite end constantly in view.

(b) You must have an outline or plan as perfect as possible, and this carefully written out. Your entire reliance must be on your plan, and you must adhere to it strictly.

(c) You must not only have a definite end in view to be held fast in the mind's grasp, but you must also see what should be the salient points in the sermon, so that they may be amplified, and that, too, in due proportion.

2. You must have your mind thoroughly imbued with the idea of the sermon, and your heart suitably affected by it and towards your hearers. Very much depends on your state of mind at the time of preaching. No effort should be spared by earnest meditation on the subject, and by fervent

prayer to God. to have the mind in the best possible frame.

3. To obtain adequate resources suited to extemporaneous preaching, it would be necessary to study a great deal, to read extensively and to acquire a relish for the illustrations of truth with which the Bible abounds. Indeed, preaching extempore tends to foster this relish, and also sympathy with our hearers. M. Bautain, a distinguished extemporaneous preacher, says that his experience taught him that the greater freedom there is maintained as to the wording of a sermon, the thoughts of which are well prepared, the better it will be for the speaker. "Many a time," he says, "have we made the attempt to mix verbal preparation with extempore speaking, by preparing an exordium or peroration, with the intention of speaking better, or in a more striking manner. But we have never succeeded in reciting what we have prepared, and in the manner in which we have constructed it. Our labored compositions have always missed their object and have made us embarrassed or obscure. Thus, it appears, we were made, and we have been bound to follow our nature. In such matters the lesson to be learned is, to turn to account the demands of nature, which must be satisfied."

ADVANTAGES OF EXTEMPORANEOUS PREACHING.

1. It is a splendid mental discipline, teaching you to master your own subject, and to take in at

one view its grand outlines in their correct and graceful proportion, with their subordinate parts, and even minute details. The educational value of this is very great, indeed, not surpassed nor even equaled, by any other part of a liberal education. You thus acquire a kind of mental rhetoric which is independent of mechanical aid. To acquire this accomplishment alone would more than compensate for all the time and labor spent on systematic rhetoric. Well did Lord Bacon call rhetoric "the crown and glory of a liberal education."

2. The acquisition of a spoken, as distinguished from a written style. This will greatly improve the style of your written sermons. To this distinction Cicero attaches very great importance.

3. It will also make the delivery more easy and natural; while it need not detract from the dignity of one who speaks as an ambassador of Christ, and who does not deliver his own statements but the testimony of God. Extempore speaking is so natural that it favors correct elocution. Besides, hearers sympathize with a speaker who neither reads his speech nor repeats from memory, but actually expresses his thoughts and feelings at the time of speaking.

"No man's delivery can be wholly bad if he have thoughts to utter that are worth the uttering, if he be master of the thoughts—they may not always be his—and if he is intent on impressing his auditors. The extemporizer is commonly more ef-

fective than he who speaks a lesson conned, or speaks from a manuscript, simply because his mind is more fully occupied with the thought as he gives it utterance. I say commonly more effective, because it is possible for at least some persons so to cultivate the art of delivery as to be fully as effective in the delivery of a lesson conned as they would be if the whole—thought and language—were their own."—Alfred Ayres.

4. A far higher standard of efficiency as a preacher. Not to speak of Augustine and Chrysostom,—Luther, Calvin, Wesley and Whitfield seem to have adopted this method. But these examples should be taken with due caution. The preaching of Chrysostom and Augustine was more expository than would be acceptable at present. The preaching of the reformers was more exigetical and controversial than would be suitable now. Even Calvin supposed that the chief reformers were men who were specially raised up and qualified by the Holy Spirit for the great work entrusted to them, so that the office of evangelist was, for a time, restored. While Whitfield and Wesley were eminent preachers they were rather fitted to awaken a nation sunk in spiritual slumber than to edify a settled and fully organized congregation at the present day. However, the preaching of these men shows the rhetorical power that is attainable in extemporaneous discourse. But when we think of imitating them, we should bear in mind that they were men of great ability, placed in very peculiar

circumstances. In fact there was so much exceptional in their case that, although their success may show what is attainable in extempore address, yet the encouragement it furnishes to persons in ordinary circumstances is very small indeed. I believe that their popularity and usefulness would be adequately accounted for without much reference to their extemporaneous method.

"When the great French orators, Bossuet, Fenelon, etc., preached extempore, they fell not only below themselves but below ordinary preachers." Thus extemporaneous preaching of a high order has been attained by only a few singularly gifted men, and these, too, favored by circumstances of time and place. Rev. A. Barnes adopted this method successfully after the sixtieth year of his age. But he had been a lifelong student and had composed commentaries on the most important parts of Scripture. Henry Ward Beecher also preached extempore sometimes. He advises ministers to preach a third, or at most, two-thirds of their sermons extempore, unwisely adding the words, "if they can preach at all." An eloquent and able New York divine preached thus forty years ago. But he commenced his Sabbath preparations on Wednesday morning and shut himself up for the remainder of the week. It is said that preaching without writing is a great saving of time and labor. This needs qualification. It is a saving of time only because you can construct and compose your sermons when you are visiting and travelling,

or performing manual labor. It is no saving of memory, as it is as difficult to remember what you have constructed in the mind as what you have written on paper. Besides, Cicero justly says that a retentive memory is indispensable to an orator. If he has this he should cultivate it; if he has it not he must acquire it.

5. Ability to speak when called on suddenly. It is damaging in such circumstances when a preacher is dumb.

6. Another advantage which may exceed all others put together is that of preaching your written sermons a second time extempore, after allowing a reasonable time to elapse. I would not take the old notes to the desk, nor would I seek to commit them to memory. But I would think the subject over and lodge it in the mind, and seek to be duly affected by it. This would make it virtually a new sermon. It would have all the naturalness and warmth of a new sermon. It would have substantially all the charm that an extempore sermon can possess. Besides, it would reveal the knowledge of text, and the main plan that the old sermon had. Thus the exegesis would be correct and also the subject; all else would be new. It would thus have all the interest and power of a written, and also of an extemporaneous sermon. Its interest instead of being impaired would be doubled, as it would be a written sermon converted into an extempore sermon, possessing the good qualities of both.

This is quite reasonable. It would be a shocking waste of time and labor to spend much of either on a sermon with the understanding that it shall be preached only once. Besides, adopting my suggestion would make your preaching more acceptable to the congregation. Indeed, it is but a small fraction of a sermon that a congregation can understand and still less that they can remember. When I hear an ordinary sermon, I would be glad to hear it preached to me next Lord's Day. You may say that the texts would reveal the repetition, but you can find the same text in two or three Gospels. Devotional texts are often repeated in the Bible. Moreover I have shown that you should preach on subjects, not on texts. I speak from very many years' experience when I say that the fears referred to are groundless. Some would say that you can repeat your sermons by preaching them in congregations where you happen to be a stranger. But what I endeavor to show is how to preach the same sermon in your own congregation, or at home; not only so but to preach the sermons in such a manner that the second preaching of them shall be more interesting and impressive than the first preaching of them. This, in course of time, would double the value of your written sermons.

I wish to make a few additional remarks on extemporaneous preaching. It is the highest ideal, in my view, of persuasive preaching. To have something of great importance to say to an audi-

ence, and then to have to go to your desk and write it out carefully, and afterwards take it and read it before an audience, must be a circuitous process, occasioning a great loss of interest and power in your own mind. It seems unnatural. Yet it is almost dangerous to make this statement, as students might be led to preach extemporaneously before they were qualified to do so. Hence, I would indicate that to preach well in this manner is a very high attainment, demanding much and protracted study and very high qualifications. A young minister should write one discourse a week. This would secure accuracy in thought, precision and force in expression, and facility and pleasure in writing. If a young minister adopt the extemporaneous method exclusively before he has carefully formed his style, and acquired ample information on the subject which he has to discuss, and grasp of mind and ripeness of judgment and of religious experience, he will be likely to fail entirely in the ministry. You must not expect to succeed at once. Success in this is the reward of great labor and indomitable perseverance. But the success, usefulness and pleasure attained in even a partial use of this method will more than compensate for all the labor.

"I should lay it down as a rule, admitting of no exceptions, that a man will speak well in proportion as he has written much; and that with equal talents, he will be the finest extempore speaker, when no time for preparing is allowed, who has

prepared himself most sedulously when he had an opportunity of delivering a premeditated speech. All the exceptions I have ever heard cited to this principle are apparent ones only!"—Lord Brougham.

The experience of Rev. Dr. R. S. Storrs, of Brooklyn, is worthy of notice. He had studied a subject very thoroughly although he had not written on it. He was unexpectedly called upon to preach in the Church of the Pilgrims and, as he had nothing prepared, he spoke extemporaneously on the subject referred to, with such success that he was called to the pastorate of the church. Immediately after his induction he preached in the same manner, but failed so completely that he did not dare to make a similar attempt for fifteen years. After this, and during the remainder of his long ministry, he wrote one sermon a week and preached the other extemporaneously. He says in reference to the latter, "I would not have any one think that this method brings any saving of work. If any one undertakes to prosecute it with that end in view he will inevitably fail."

Van Oosterzee, expressing his own sentiments and those of eminent German divines, considers extemporaneous preaching intolerable presumption and hardihood.

7. But there is an advantage of extempore preaching that has been entirely overlooked, which is that the method of it which I have explained will so discipline the mind, and so cultivate and

strengthen the memory that the person who partially uses it will be able to deliver his written sermons with scarcely any conscious effort. This is an important consideration. It shows how memorized preaching or written sermons and extempore preaching will sustain one another and secure probably the highest excellence attainable by any minister.

Speeches connected with religious meetings are very closely related, in method and style, to extemporaneous preaching. These speeches must have a subject. If there is not this there is nothing. But the subject should not be formally enunciated, although held fast by the speaker as his only and indispensable guide. It should be introduced in a free and informal manner. The successive parts of the speech should be gracefully rounded off somewhat like paragraphs. The junctures between them should be skilfully and gracefully made, but easily and informally. The style must have less rigidity and more vivacity than that of the sermon. Care should be taken not to make the structure of the speech merely a frame in which a series of descriptions and anecdotes may be set. In this case, there is properly no subject, and certainly no edification. Speeches should never be made by a Christian minister merely for the purpose of excitation, like the demonstrative orations of the ancient Sophists, which brought speech-making, and even rhetoric, into merited and lasting contempt. The peroration should be as easy and in-

formal as the introduction. But it should be effective, producing a decided impression or impulse. But this must not be merely emphatic repetition. The idea may be presented in different aspects which support one another, the whole culminating in a climax of interest and power, and gracefully terminated by some sententious saying or maxim. (This paragraph is abridged from a book on elocution.)

Studies which should be prosecuted with the view of obtaining proficiency in Religious Discourse.

1. A person should acquire a good nervous style by studying the higher grammars, by reading good authors, and by correcting severely his own compositions. I would recommend the study of Bain's Rhetoric.

2. He should thoroughly master logical concepts and the manner of discussing them in either quantity, and also the various kinds of arguments and the order in which they should be arranged with the view of excitation and persuasion. It would be useful to study McCosh's Logic, especially his discussion of concepts, which is full and clear, and also his explanation of judgments.

3. He should render himself familiar with the emotional nature, carefully distinguishing and classifying the feelings, and acquiring skill in exciting, correcting and vitalizing them. It would be well to study Edwards on the religious affections, and also Sully's Outlines of Psychology.

4. He should acquire a knowledge of popular

maxims, with the view of popularizing his preaching. This can be secured only by reading current literature, associating with the people in their meetings and in their homes, and thus becoming acquainted with their habits of thought, feeling and expression.

PUBLIC RELIGIOUS SERVICE.

Our aim at present is to indicate how the unity of the whole service is to be secured. This, it is fully admitted, belongs to homiletics. It is not enough to have unity in the sermon. It will be of little use if it does not pervade the whole service. Indeed, if there be incongruity between the sermon and the other parts of the service this will be painfully felt; it may defeat the preacher's purpose; it will also show the want of a definite subject and aim in the preacher's mind.

1. The psalms and hymns should be in harmony with the sermon, as the sermon is the principal or leading part of the service, at least in the Presbyterian Church. The last two psalms or hymns should be specially adapted to the spirit of the sermon. When this is complied with the congregation will manifest great sympathy with the purpose of the sermon. This will be specially manifested by the heartiness with which the people join in the singing. In the Presbyterian Church this is the only part of the service in which the voice of the people is heard. It is a great matter when the voice of the people is in harmony with that of the preacher.

Of course, the selection of suitable tunes is subsidiary to this. It is partially provided for in the tone of the hymns themselves, and specially in the "Helps to the use of the Hymn Book" recently published.

2. The portions of Scripture read should be carefully selected to suit and support the subject of the sermon. Thus your subject will be seen to rest not merely on a brief text, but also on an ample portion of the Word of God. The divine authority of the sermon will thus be emphasized. Besides, suitable feeling subsidiary to the subject will be excited. If remarks are made on the passages read they may secure still stricter unity. But the remarks should be brief and they should be confined to salient points. A few sentences well selected will be sufficient. Elocution should not be prominent enough to be specially felt, or even noticed.

3. The prayers should be generally pervaded by the same tone. (a) In prayer, the divine names should be used sparingly, with the deepest reverence and with strict propriety. Sometimes these names are used merely for the sake of emphasis. This almost amounts to profanity. The divine names are not meaningless, like ours, but deeply significant; and they are thus used in Scripture. It is surely not suitable to pray to God Almighty to forgive our sins. Forgiveness of sin does not depend on the attribute of power. Indeed, it is also improper to use the verb to forgive in such a

connection at all. We pray to Our Father in Heaven to forgive our sins; but if we pray to God as our Lord and Judge, we should use the word pardon, not forgive.

The distinction between the names Jesus and Christ should be respected. Peter and Paul addressing Jews proved that Jesus was the Christ, i. e., the Messiah. Jesus is our Lord's personal name; Lord and Christ are His official titles. Those who address the Saviour, or speak of Him in a familiar manner, call Him Jesus. Such familiarity is not becoming. The old divines were wont to prefix Lord to Jesus, as Paul does in I Cor. XI:23,—"the Lord Jesus." Reverence should be cultivated, and it is susceptible of culture, as it is most becoming.

It is well to use Scripture language in prayer but not long passages. Enough of a quotation to suit your purpose, but no more, should be used. If you quote at too great length you will scarcely be able to retain the subject of your prayer. If there is reference to Scripture, it should be correctly quoted, without adding to or taking from. Not only so, but it should be used according to correct meaning. It is not correct, for example, to quote Isaiah I:5-6 as if it referred to depravity, when it really refers to punishment.

The various topics of prayer, adoration, thanksgiving, confession, intercession and prayers for mercy, and for the Holy Spirit, etc., may be differently arranged for the sake of variety, and special

amplification of topics may introduce greater variety and Scripture adaptation. In fact these two processes may secure as great variety as desired. Devotional ideas should be grouped under the topics to which they belong, and not permitted to stray in confusion through the prayer. All the essential topics need not be repeated the same day. The principal prayer need not exceed five minutes.

Prayers should be specially adapted to various occasions: e. g., sacraments and marriages. But this need not lengthen the prayer. Our forefathers, when special prayers were required, were in the habit of adding the special to the ordinary prayer. This took place especially in connection with the communion. Whereas, for the most part, the special prayers should be largely substituted for the ordinary prayers. The special prayers connected with marriage and the addresses to the persons concerned should be carefully written out and spoken correctly from memory. These exercises should be brief, well composed and in perfectly good taste. To talk in a careless and incoherent manner in connection with marriage is intolerable. Surely there ought to be a very carefully prepared address and prayer connected with baptism. This would explain the nature of the ordinance and lead to its edifying observance. Rightly dispensed it should be a means of grace to the congregation assembled, as well as to the parents.

I may say, speaking from experience, I have always used carefully prepared addresses and pray-

ers connected with these two services; and would not willingly dispense with them. They are conservative of the solemnity and dignity which should characterize religious services.

(b) To acquire facility and excellence in public prayer, we should meditate on the prayers recorded in Scripture, and also on devotional sentiments; we should addict ourselves to secret prayer; we should, before going to church, meditate on the general plan of the prayer we intend to offer up, and seek earnestly the help of the Holy Spirit. Why should we study carefully what we intend to address to our fellowmen and never think of what we are to address to God? The Directory for Public Worship at the end of the Confession of Faith should be carefully studied and mastered. This is an excellent directory for public prayer and is admirably composed. It is fitted to make a deep impression even when studied and read in private. There are no forms of prayer in it, but there is the most edifying matter of prayer. It would be most conducive to edification were ministers to study and meditate on it once a month. It is a rich treasury of devotional matter. It is a great loss to the Church that, although its ministers in general study the sermon which they preach, they do not study the prayers that they offer up. This is a great defect in our public service. Of course, there are petitions that need not now be offered up, which had a peculiar and local occasion which does not now exist.

There is a lamentable want of confession of sin. This part of public prayer is almost entirely omitted. Yet a prayer book is not the proper remedy for it. Dean Farrar believes that the English Church Prayer Book occasions many to leave their church and join non-conformist bodies.

AS TO THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION.

The full form is in II Corinthians. If it is used as Paul uses it, it is a benediction. If it is used in the first plural, it is a prayer. Communion and fellowship are never used in connection in the Bible; their meaning is identical. Ministers should not add to nor take from the benediction. They should not substitute for it the priestly benediction in Numbers VI., nor Hebrews XIII:20-21. If they do not like the Apostolic benediction they may conclude with a short prayer. The benediction is very full in import and addressed to all the persons of the Blessed Trinity.

4. Pulpit announcements, not "intimations," should be made as brief as possible. Those generally made are too numerous and distracting; and they reveal an amount of machinery quite incompatible with the simplicity of the Apostolic Church. If such notices must be given, they should be printed and then posted in the vestibule of the church. Unsuitable announcements should be entirely rejected. Short announcements of strictly religious services should be given, and also of congregational affairs; but those of services conflicting with your

own, and of persons and things of which you know nothing, should be declined.

5. Unity and the same tone should pervade the whole service. This will maintain interest and produce a decided impression. On successive Sabbaths you will thus have not only new sermons but also new services.

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